



Middle East Research
& Information Project

ISSN: 0047-7626
MERIP REPORTS No. 67

ALGERIA'S AGRARIAN REVOLUTION

Workers Revolt in Tunisia

Human Rights in Morocco and Tunisia

Oman



\$1.25 / 70p



Middle East Research & Information Project

TABLE of CONTENTS

ALGERIA'S AGRARIAN REVOLUTION

- Introduction, *Jim Paul* p. 3
The Agrarian Revolution and Algerian Socialism, *Nico Kielstra* p. 5

THE WORKING CLASS REVOLT IN TUNISIA, *Nigel Disney* p. 12

HUMAN RIGHTS IN MOROCCO AND TUNISIA, *Eqbal Ahmad & Stuart Schaar* p. 15

ECONOMIC DECLINE IN OMAN, *Fred Halliday* p. 18

CURRENT EVENTS

- Letter from Amman, *Jean Harris* p. 21

RESPONSE

- The Horn of Africa: A Dissenting View, *Fred Halliday* p. 24

Notes on contributors: Nico Kielstra is a lecturer in anthropology at the University of Amsterdam, specializing in problems of land reform and rural development. Jim Paul is an editor of *MERIP Reports*. Nigel Disney and Fred Halliday are contributing editors of *MERIP Reports*. Eqbal Ahmad is with the Institute for Policy Studies/Transnational Institute; Stuart Schaar is in the Department of History at Brooklyn College. Jean Harris is a friend of MERIP presently living in Amman, Jordan.

The MERIP Collective

Editorial Committee: Lynne Barbee, Peter Johnson, Joan Mandell, Jim Paul, Joe Stork, Judith Tucker
Associates: Walter Carroll, Karen Farsoun, Priscilla Norris, Stephanie Reich, Lynn Tietsworth
Contributing Editors: Mahfoud Bennoune, Carole Collins, Nigel Disney, Fred Halliday

Special thanks to: Art for People; Glad Day Press; Patty Huntington.

Copyright: Middle East Research & Information Project, Inc., May 1978 — Vol. 8, No. 4.
ISSN: 0047-4726

Business and editorial address: MERIP, P.O. Box 3122, Washington, D.C. 20010
New England regional address: MERIP, P.O. Box 48, Cambridge, MA. 02138
New York regional address: MERIP, P.O. Box 1247, New York, NY 10025
In Britain, subscriptions and back issues: MERAG, 5 Caledonian Road, London N.1, England

We encourage the submission of manuscripts relevant to MERIP's focus on the political economy of the contemporary Middle East, the role of imperialism, and the popular struggles in the region. This includes general theoretical contributions relevant to these issues and substantive articles connecting politics in the industrialized capitalist countries and developments in the Middle East. Main articles should be 4,000-6,000 words. Book reviews should be 1,000-2,000 words; we will also accept longer review articles and shorter review notes. Interviews should be 1,500-4,000 words. Current events pieces should be 500-2,000 words. Letters to the editors are welcome; they should be no more than 1,500 words. We also would like to receive unusual documents and data. All manuscripts must be typed and submitted in duplicate. An information and style sheet for authors is available upon request.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO MERIP ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE!

ALGERIA'S AGRARIAN REVOLUTION

INTRODUCTION Jim Paul

An analysis of the present nature and future course of the Algeria regime is indispensable for any assessment of the contemporary Middle East. MERIP has published two important articles on Algeria—Karen Farsoun's "State Capitalism in Algeria" (No. 35) and Mahfoud Bennoune's "Algerian Peasants and National Politics" (No. 48). The following piece by Nico Kielstra introduces the question of the Algerian Agrarian Revolution.

CONTRADICTIONARY DEVELOPMENT

In the course of a long and brutal colonial experience, Algeria produced an influential national liberation movement and an important body of revolutionary theory in the work of Frantz Fanon. In the period immediately following independence, it attracted international attention with a system of worker's self-management. As the colonial settlers fled, the new regime swiftly confiscated their property and declared a variety of radical social measures. It later nationalized big foreign capital and pursued a policy of economic independence through rapid industrialization. In short, Algeria emerged as the most appealing and progressive of the region's "radical nationalist" regimes.

But the limits of the Algerian experience have become increasingly apparent. Soon after independence, the new regime moved to muzzle the left, defend the Algerian bourgeoisie, impose controls on worker's self-management and install a rigid bureaucratic system. Internal conditions were marked

by high unemployment, urban crowding, inflation, malnutrition, a stagnant and impoverished agriculture and resurgent Islamic fundamentalism. Lacking a stable class base and contemptuous of its own political party, the Algerian regime began to depend increasingly on the loyalties of the military officer corps. Left organizations were banned; oppositionists jailed or exiled; and the working class repressed. The increasing stream of Algerians migrating overseas for work confirmed that the Algerian path to economic and social development was seriously flawed.

French colonial settlers had seized over three million hectares of the best agricultural land in Algeria, but contrary to colonial myths settler agriculture was never a particularly profitable endeavor. Scant rainfall, poor soil and other unfavorable natural conditions kept productivity low. The colonial banks refused to provide agricultural credit and the colonial state had to subsidize farming. Consequently, the forces of production in settler agriculture were not highly developed. The Algerian peasantry, crowded into the least productive lands, attempted to eke out a bare subsistence.

About two thirds of the Algerian population lived on the land at the time of independence, but only half actually owned small plots. The rest were either unemployed, displaced, sharecroppers, seasonal or permanent agricultural workers. More than 90 percent of this agricultural population existed within the traditional sector, where extreme poverty and backwardness prevailed.

From independence until the proclamation of the Agrarian Revolution in 1971, the regime systematically neglected the condition of the peasantry and the development of agriculture. Social relations in the traditional sector were allowed to stagnate, apparently for fear of antagonizing the agrarian bourgeoisie. Even the former settler farms, transformed into the self-managed sector, were ignored and starved of capital so that they were not able to reproduce the rather dilapidated plant inherited at the time of independence.

This neglected agriculture yielded poor crops, its production falling far short of meeting the country's needs. Cereal harvests in 1972, a good year, barely reached the level of production in 1962, although the population had grown in the interim from 11 to 16 million. Rising food imports cut sharply into development plans; by 1975, the regime had to spend nearly a quarter of its oil earnings on food imports. At the same time, rising food prices cut into the real wages of the urban working class.

The peasantry also faced worsening poverty. Unable to raise enough food for their own subsistence, they suffered from one of the lowest levels of caloric food intake in the world—even worse than conditions in India according to a 1970 UN report. According to an Algerian government estimate in the mid-1970s, close to half of the rural population depended for survival on earnings repatriated by migrant workers.

The poverty of the agricultural sector caused further serious problems for the regime. It forced a continual flood of people off the land and into the cities. The working class grew rapidly in size from about 300,000 at independence to more than a million in 1977. Even more significant was the rapid growth of the industrial proletariat in the large modern units of heavy industry promoted by the state. The giant El Hajar steel complex was symbolic of this development, employing more than 10,000 workers by the mid-1970s. Overall the number of workers in large factories has grown to over 200,000.

However, the capitalist labor market could not provide enough jobs. Although nearly a million persons had migrated overseas for work by the mid-1970s, unemployment continued to rise. Employers, including the state, kept wages frozen and the regime was able to impose its own leadership on the trade unions. Nevertheless, there were frequent disputes over pay and working conditions and sometimes also over control of the work process. In 1971, the regime responded to this rising pressure by announcing the Charter of the Agrarian Revolution and the Charter of Socialist Management which granted a limited form of management participation. But the participation system did not work. Between 1969 and 1974, the number of strikes — many of them wildcats — grew from 72 to more than 250. Workers also resorted to sabotage and slowdowns, greatly reducing productivity. The regime threatened union leaders, denounced trouble-makers and arrested some workers, but it failed to prevent continued protest actions.

As the European economy slowed down, overseas labor migration ceased to provide alternative employment. Peasants have continued to pour into the cities, enlarging the alienated and unstable mass of urban unemployed liable to be mobilized by critics of the regime. Conditions for workers and the unemployed continued to deteriorate as inflation reduced real wages and living conditions in the crowded cities became increasingly intolerable. Housing was scarce, meat unobtainable, and public transport extremely slow and unreliable. In response,

work stoppages and sabotage spread further, culminating in major strikes by truckers and the Algiers dock workers in 1977. In an effort to head off more trouble, the regime announced a big wage increase.

An impoverished agriculture also failed to provide a market for the products of the new state industries. Small peasant proprietors, on the verge of starvation, could not afford good seed or simple hand tools, much less fertilizer, pumps and tractors. State planners realized that unless the agricultural sector was transformed both as a source of production and of consumption, the ambitious plans for the Algerian economy would be reduced to a shambles.

For all its powerful positions in state and society, the Algerian bourgeoisie has been in an ambiguous and somewhat threatened position since 1970. Those who held rural land were most exposed, since the Agrarian Revolution directly challenged agricultural property rights of large landholders. Unable to block the Charter of the Agrarian Revolution itself, the Algerian bourgeoisie set out to block and circumvent its implementation. Using connections in the concerned ministries as well as loopholes in the laws, quite a few landholdings were kept intact. Nevertheless, many rural bourgeois were not able to escape and their lands were expropriated.

Under these circumstances, the bourgeoisie assumed for the first time a position of direct opposition to the regime. Taking advantage of discontent among the working class and the peasantry as well as the political opening presented by the National Charter, the bourgeoisie pressed its offensive in an increasingly visible way around 1975. This offensive took several forms, including efforts to block official programs through non-cooperation, sabotage of production and trade, hoarding and slowing down deliveries and a public ideological attack. In March 1976, a number of well-known politicians, including Ferhat Abbas and Yussef Ben Khedda, issued a manifesto denouncing the regime. Such attacks contained a mixture of liberalism and Islamic fundamentalism that reflected the heterogeneous origins and aspirations of the Algerian bourgeoisie, the diversity of its audience and perhaps the sources of its foreign support as well. Its audience and foot soldiers were conservative shopkeepers, disenchanted youth, elements of the urban unemployed, and members of the state bureaucracy.

It is in this context that the Algerian Agrarian Revolution must be examined, six years after its inception. The impact of the Agrarian Revolution, its limits and dynamic, tell us much about the path of Algerian society in the period ahead.

THE AGRARIAN REVOLUTION & ALGERIAN SOCIALISM

Nico Kielstra

When Algeria gained independence in 1962, about 40 percent of the French farmers left their farms, abandoning about 800,000 hectares of land. Algerian authorities were faced with the problem of maintaining productivity on these farms, which provided the food supply of the urban population. Meanwhile, Algerian workers organized workers' management committees on the abandoned farms. The government soon legalized these committees, and in the fall of 1963 it expropriated the remaining French farms and included them under the workers' self-management system. Of 2.7 million hectares of French farms, some 3-400,000 hectares just "disappeared"; they were appropriated by private Algerians in some legal or illegal way. On the remaining 2.4 million hectares, a new socialist sector in agriculture arose.

The Ben Bella regime (1962-65) attached great ideological importance to this sector, portraying it as the vanguard of a new socialist Algeria based on a system of worker's self-management.¹ The regime's emphasis on workers' self-management in agriculture was closely related to a key political myth: that the Algerian Revolution was fought by the peasantry to regain land taken by the French.² This myth partially reflected reality. Most of the combatants in the Revolution were probably of peasant origin, but the Revolution was organized and led by members of the recently urbanized petty bourgeoisie, often former minor officials and salaried employees. This group had enough education to obtain a general perspective on the political situation, and was most directly blocked in its career expectations by discriminatory French colonial attitudes and regulations.

After independence, it legitimated its political power in terms of revolutionary peasant leadership. However, most of these leaders realized that the country's development depended mainly on rapid industrialization and that this industrialization could be financed only from oil and gas revenues and not from a very limited surplus squeezed from a relatively poor agriculture.

THE BOURGEOISIE

Official socialism and the large private sector in the Algerian economy have always coexisted uneasily. The main problem is not the large sector of small retail shops, which no one has ever seriously considered nationalizing. It is rather the powerful private wholesale sector and the more modest private light industry.

The Muslim bourgeoisie was not strongly developed in colonial Algeria, representing not more than one percent of the population. Its capital reserves were far too limited to finance the development of heavy industry, so the Algerian regime had to choose between developing state industries or remaining completely dependent on foreign investments. When oil and gas revenues rose rapidly in the 1960s, the case was decided in favor of state industries, with foreign investors allowed only a minority interest. To stimulate the development of these state industries, the government has consistently controlled wages and the level of consumption. However, the bourgeoisie in commerce and light industry wants to promote a consumer society to foster sales; it opposes rapid development of state industry based on relatively low wages and a high level of reinvestment.

The bourgeoisie played a modest role in the independence movement. After independence, the need for skilled and highly-trained officials gave it a strong grip in the new state apparatus, but it never gained complete domination. Some of the Algerian bourgeoisie had hoped to take over French businesses, but workers and leftists prevented this by occupying some of these enterprises and inaugurating a system of workers' self-management. This weak state apparatus could do little else than legalize this initiative, since none of the irregular armed forces, on which its power was based, would have been willing to fight for the interests of the bourgeoisie. However, the bourgeoisie was able to protect its own holdings. The disappearance of most French wholesale and retail traders caused a

sharp increase in business for Algerians established in these branches. Between 1962 and 1970, internal government disagreements prevented the nationalization of Algerian-owned means of production. So the former French enterprises, of which agriculture was the most important, became the showcase to legitimate Algeria's claims to socialism.

The stagnation of productive private investment, especially in light industry, was probably decisive in overcoming the government's hesitation about land reform. In the first development plan (1967), private initiative was left with responsibility for expansion of light industry, even though it was to provide a major share of the much-needed new employment. Although far less than the state's oil and gas revenues, considerable private capital existed that could have been invested in light industry. The annual investment fund of the Algerian bourgeoisie amounts to at least DA 800 million.* In 1970, total private investments amounted to DA 3,500.³ Even at a very low rate of profit, these investments would produce over DA 100 million annually in net profits. Commerce's share in the 1970 GNP amounted to DA 4,920 million, of which 90 percent was in private hands.⁴ Here, reinvestable profits may have amounted to some DA 500-1000 million a year. Finally, annual land rents accruing to large private landowners have been estimated at between DA 100 and 200 million.

Out of the total annual accumulation of at least DA 800 million, only an average of DA 112.5 million a year was invested in industry between 1967 and 1974. And of DA 282.5 million of industrial investments from 1967 to 1970, only 5.3 percent was financed from agricultural sources. Land rents, therefore, contributed minimally to industrialization.

Deducting industrial investments, some DA 700 million were available annually for other private investment. Of this sum, about DA 390 million were placed in bank and postal accounts,⁵ through which they became available for public investment. Some of the remainder was certainly exported, in spite of tight government regulations. Unfavorable black market exchange rates for the Algerian dinar make large-scale illegal capital export unattractive, however, in comparison to highly profitable speculative activities within Algeria. At least DA 300 million and probably more were invested in unproductive commercial activities. The large number of entrepreneurs had already overcapitalized the commercial sector.⁶ Such a situation tends to lengthen commercial chains (increasing the number of middlemen), to stimulate speculation and in general to result in a rise of retail prices. These merchants' short-term interests are opposed to the government's policy of austerity and priority to private investment. A rapid general rise in the standard of living would be more profitable for this group than a high rate of public investment.

If the government can eliminate land rent and increase public participation in commerce, this parasitic capital accumulation will be directed to the benefit of the standard of living of part of the peasantry. An oppositional group would be weakened and some political support gained among the poor rural population. The second Four Year Plan (1974-77) and the National Charter (1976) provide for major state participation in light industries, thus further weakening the prospects of the entrepreneurial bourgeoisie.

THE TRADITIONAL SECTOR

After independence, life continued as before for the peasants in the traditional sector of agriculture. Migration to France provided the only hope of relief from their acute poverty. Social inequities in the countryside increased, as the intermediate sector⁷ of privately-owned medium and large farms prospered in the late 1960s and began to purchase many new tractors.⁸

Except for the rebellion in Kabylia in 1963-64, the peasantry remained passive, but in the late 1960s some provincial governors began to report an increasing peasant dissatisfaction towards the state and its ideology.⁹ This dissatisfaction was not expressed in open political opposition, but in a turn towards traditional folk religion as opposed to the purified, orthodox Islam propagated by the state. The peasantry had reacted against French colonialism by a similar retreat into traditionalism. It thus represented a certain security risk to the state. The peasantry might not rebel spontaneously, but it might be mobilized by any of the existing right or left-wing urban-based opposition groups, just as the urban-based nationalist movement had rapidly mobilized the peasants in 1954-56. A regional peasant rebellion would not immediately overthrow a regime supported by the professional army. But even minor civil disorder would certainly contribute to the long-term political destabilization of the country.

ORIGINS OF THE SELF-MANAGED FARMS

From the beginning, the workers' self-management system did not work very well. In the anarchic period right after independence, peasant revolutionaries made few attempts to occupy French-owned land. Over half a million people from the countryside, including many combattants, rushed to the cities to take the place of the departing French. Most rural combattants were unemployed or underemployed youths from the traditional sector of agriculture. Few were recruited among the year-round workers on French farms, who had permanent jobs and were closely supervised by French authorities. It was not the rank and file of unskilled workers, but educated Algerians, former overseers, agricultural technicians and skilled employees, who initiated the workers' councils. They continue to dominate the workers' councils to this day.¹⁰

Economic prospects for the new socialist sector in agriculture were not brilliant. Agricultural equipment was delapidated, since French farmers had not replaced it in the final years before independence. The banks—not nationalized until 1966—refused to provide agricultural credit.¹¹ And the skilled Algerian workers knew only the technical aspects of farm work; they were not trained in economic management.

State support for the new socialized farms was verbose but not very effective. A small Trotskyist faction in the state apparatus favored autonomous workers' self-management, but this faction controlled only the propaganda machinery. A large faction, especially among minor officials, opposed socialist forms of enterprise and gave them merely token support. The strongest faction at the top, including the first two ministers of agriculture, Auzegane and Mahsas, favored strong, centralized state control over the socialist sector. They imposed government-nominated directors on the socialist farms, who effectively controlled management in accordance with minis-

*\$1 = DA 3.92 (1978).



Top: French Colonialist with "his" peasants.
Bottom: Peasants in a nursery in Mitidja.

terial directives. And official organizations assumed responsibility for credit, supplies and marketing.

Between 1963 and 1966, the government regrouped 22,000 farms, covering 2.4 million hectares, into about 2000 huge agricultural enterprises. This was an error, for in agriculture, economies of scale are not effective over a certain limit — no more than 250-300 hectares even in wheat-growing — so large farms may be inefficient. It is very difficult to manage huge agricultural enterprises, even for skilled and experienced agronomists, which most of the directors were not. Furthermore, the new large-scale farms made self-management even more difficult. Unskilled workers lost all control over management and all interest in exercising their legal rights of participation.

Up to 1972, production remained below colonial levels. The government held down wheat prices to prevent a rise in urban wages. Wine exports declined in the face of French import restrictions. And the government bureaucracy could not provide enough effective management and marketing to make fruit and vegetable growing profitable. Workers on the farms were entitled to a share in the profits, but since profits were rare, the government-guaranteed minimum wage became the workers' real wage. Approximately 170,000 year-round agricultural workers became in fact state employees. They had the advantage of a regular job — in a country where unemployment was running 40 percent — but their wages were low compared to urban wages.

The Boumedienne government, which took over in 1965, maintained the socialist farms, but quite realistically dropped them as the ideological showpiece of Algerian socialism. State-owned heavy industry assumed the major role in official propaganda.

THE AGRARIAN REVOLUTION

The Charter of the Agrarian Revolution was proclaimed by presidential decree in 1971. The program was divided into three phases. In the first phase, arable state and communal lands, which previously had been used for pasture or leased to private farmers, were to be given out to landless laborers or small peasants without enough land.

In the second phase, all absentee landlords' property greater than five hectares was to be expropriated. So was all land worked directly by the owner, in so far as the owner's net income from the land exceeded about DA 13,500 a year — the equivalent of the maximum salaries paid on state farms. The owners were to receive an indemnification in treasury paper payable in 15 years with 2.5 percent yearly interest.

The land that became available under the first and second phases of the Agrarian Revolution was to be given out on a permanent basis, with no right of resale and with the obligation of cultivating it personally. It was to be given to landless laborers and small landowning peasants with a net agricultural income of less than DA 3,000 a year. The size of the parcels were to guarantee a net yearly income of at least DA 3,750 a year — the legal minimum wage. The beneficiaries were to organize themselves into production cooperatives averaging 10 - 25 members, and to work the land in common. This rule was to be suspended only when the authorities decided that a cooperative was not practically feasible. Such cooperatives could obtain easy credit facilities for productive investments. Small landowning peasants who were not beneficiaries

of the Agrarian Revolution could join existing cooperatives or constitute their own voluntary cooperatives. The state guaranteed cooperative members a net yearly income of about DA 3,000, paid in monthly advances, while the additional profits were to be divided among the members once a year. If a cooperative began to grow new crops that were not immediately productive — such as orchards — the state agreed to pay the cooperative members the legal minimum wage of approximately DA 15 a day as long as the crops remained unproductive.

All production cooperatives (CAPRAS*) in a municipality were to be organized into a marketing and service cooperative (CAPCS) for more efficient use of agricultural machinery. A CAPCS would buy cooperatives' produce and resell it to local retailers, and could set up a non-profit store for members. All CAPCSs in a province were grouped together into a provincial marketing cooperative (COFEL) that was to buy the surplus production from the different CAPCSs and resell it to retailers within the province. A national state company, the OFLA, was to buy the surpluses from these COFELs for sale in other provinces or for export.

In the third phase of the Agrarian Revolution, flock ownership in the southern steppe zone was to be limited to 220 animals per household. Those who owned more sheep were to be obliged to sell them within two years. Herdsmen without property were to receive 100 sheep each from the government and would be obliged to participate in the same system of cooperatives as the beneficiaries of the first two phases. Finally, in places where a considerable number of beneficiaries live far from their land, new "socialist" or "agricultural" villages would be constructed for them.

The first phase of the Agrarian Revolution started in 1972 and was completed at the end of 1974. The government divided 788,283 hectares of state and communal land among 53,674 persons, organized into 2,921 production cooperatives. The second phase began in 1973, following a quick land survey in 1972. It was scheduled for completion by the end of 1974, but was still under way in 1976. Estimates of the amount of land to be expropriated vary widely, but the figure is probably 800,000 hectares,¹² with about 70,000 persons benefitting from this redistribution. The third phase started in 1975 and is still far from completed. Five thousand big owners with a total of about 2,200,000 sheep would be allowed to keep about 1,100,000. The number of animals on the available pasture land will certainly not be increased, so that 11,000 flocks of 100 sheep each can be distributed.

The total number of beneficiaries of the Agrarian Revolution will therefore be approximately 125,000 to 140,000. Observations in existing "socialist" villages¹³ suggest that one additional job will be created for every 10-15 beneficiaries, making 8,000 to 14,000 more jobs, mostly in the service sector. That brings the maximum number of persons affected to about 150,000. While the number seems large, it is small in relation to the number of potential candidates. In 1966, the number of rural unemployed was estimated at 623,000, to which should be added 220,000 persons without sufficient land to make a living and 85,000 permanently employed workers in the private sector. Of the nearly 930,000 who would qualify for benefits, only about 16 percent can participate.¹⁴

*CAPRA: Cooperative Agricole de Production de la Revolution Agraire
CAPCS: Cooperative Agricole Polyvalente de Commercialisation et de Service
COFEL: Cooperative de Fruits et Legumes
OFLA: Office des Fruits et Legumes Algeriens



Peasants at a popular rally

MERIP SPEAKERS' BUREAU

Experienced speakers on the Middle East and US policy are available through the MERIP Speakers' Bureau. For further information, write to:

MERIP Speakers' Bureau
PO Box 48
Cambridge, MA 02138

Regrouping into production cooperatives is the only way to introduce modern agricultural techniques, but such "collectivization" meets with resistance from the peasants who are used to family farming. Since recruitment is on a voluntary basis, those who are most willing to work under the new system are selected. Personal conflicts and technical problems in the starting phase cause the departure of 40 to 50 percent of the original members in some cooperatives. Thus the large number of potential candidates forms an important reserve and after a couple of years the membership of a cooperative is usually more or less stabilized.

Big landowners, opposed to the Agrarian Revolution, have been known to pressure workers and small peasants not to accept a share in the cooperatives. Nevertheless, there have been plenty of candidates except only in the immediate vicinity of the major industrial centers of Algiers, Oran and Annaba. The government plans to settle people from other regions in these areas and a first settlement project was started in 1976 in the plain of Annaba.

ASSESSMENT OF THE AGRARIAN REVOLUTION

Opponents of the Agrarian Revolution, both right-wingers defending private property and extreme left-wingers for whom Algerian socialism does not go far enough, claimed that the Agrarian Revolution could never work and that the whole program would end in chaos and general discontent. It would take too long to discuss here all the technical problems facing the Agrarian Revolution, but a general evaluation is needed.

The political goals of the operation require some degree of technical success. Shortage of trained staff poses a major problem. The Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform maintains few direct contacts with the field. At the provincial level a *charge de mission de la revolution agraire* and his assistant are in charge of coordination and control, but the two are unable to oversee everything that goes on in the field. Most are not trained agronomists but young military officers, loyal to the regime but lacking agricultural expertise. Municipal Councils have taken some initiative, but they are not always particularly enthusiastic about the Agrarian Revolution and peasants are very underrepresented on them. Provincial Directorates of Agriculture are supposed to offer technical advice to Municipal Councils and to the beneficiaries of the Agrarian Revolution. These directorates are understaffed and often employees are not eager to leave their office for the field. In general, there is an enormous shortage of trained agronomists and agricultural technicians. In 1970, Algeria had only 100 agricultural engineers, 400 technicians and 2,000 "technical agents" at its disposal, while the numbers needed were estimated at 3,500 engineers and 78,000 "skilled workers."¹⁵ Since then, some additional personnel have been trained, but the number is still far too few and will probably remain so as long as agricultural specialists receive much lower salaries (20 to 30 percent less) than other technical specialists. The Algerian government employs many foreign technical specialists but seems unwilling to place them in this politically sensitive field.

As a consequence, many of the projects of the Agrarian Revolution are carried out through trial and error rather than on the basis of scientific planning. Peasants usually understand quite well the technical shortcomings of projects and in badly planned cooperatives as many as 50 percent of the members abandon their shares within a few years, considering other employment more profitable. The legal minimum wage is about

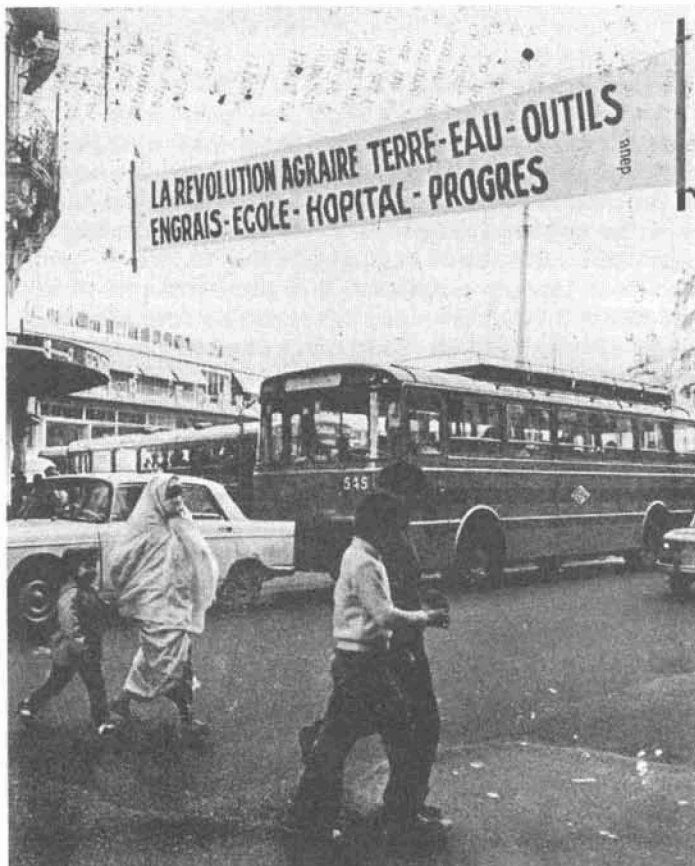
DA 3,750 a year, while participants in unprofitable cooperatives receive a guaranteed income of only DA 3,000. Part of this payment is made in kind and there are complaints that these are not always received. Nevertheless, there seem to be very few cases of cooperatives being definitely disbanded. Usually enough technical and administrative improvements are made and new members replace those who have left. Because of these trial and error procedures, the cost of projects is usually higher—up to 20-30 percent—than would have been the case with good planning.

The members' net incomes vary from one cooperative to another in a range from DA 3,000 to DA 9,000 a year with an average somewhere between 4,000 and 4,500. This is not a brilliant income even by Algerian standards, but it is still more than an agricultural worker¹⁶ or a small peasant would make. Members are usually not particularly enthusiastic about their income but most of them still consider it good enough to stay on. Young men may be tempted to seek their fortune in the cities or as migrant workers in France, but at present there are enough middle aged men with families who are willing to work in the cooperatives. The major problem for the future of the Agrarian Revolution is whether the next generation will still be willing to participate in the cooperatives. The real wages of the lowest paid urban workers are now increasing about four percent a year. Agricultural productivity will therefore have to increase about 100 percent in a generation for the peasants' standard of living to keep up with that of the urban workers. According to one estimate,¹⁷ such an increase is technically possible, but it would demand a rapid expansion of agricultural education and technical assistance, both of which are now virtually non-existent.

AUTONOMY, MARKETING AND PRODUCTIVITY

Due to the failure of the centralized bureaucratic management of the socialist farms, the government granted the cooperatives a considerable degree of formal autonomy. In practice, however, the municipal authorities or the provincial Director of Agriculture often intervene in cooperatives' affairs. The peasants resent this very much, since they have to take the financial risks and they have—often rightly—little confidence in the advice of urban officials. Cooperatives seem to function best with minimal outside administrative control. But technical advice—for example, on the treatment of plant or animal diseases—and systematic education about modern agricultural techniques must be made available, particularly to young people who are usually more willing than their elders to try new methods. Technical expertise is much esteemed in present-day Algeria and agriculture needs some technological glamor to keep active and intelligent youths on the land.

The marketing cooperatives are generally considered to be failures. The newly-appointed officials do not have the detailed knowledge of regional and seasonal changes of supply and demand necessary to market agricultural products. Nor does the state bureaucracy permit the rapid marketing decisions that are needed. Moreover, the marketing cooperatives face competition from private wholesalers, who maintain close mutual relations and collaborate to outbid the cooperatives. Although the state requires production cooperatives and socialist farms to sell their products through the cooperative system, they often sell part to private merchants offering slightly higher prices and payment in cash, while payments



Top: Urban volunteers assist peasants.
Bottom: Street banner in Algiers for the Agrarian Revolution.

from the official cooperative organization are often deferred for long periods.

The marketing cooperatives have not stopped the steady rise of retail prices for fruits and vegetables caused by speculation and middlemen. The Algerian government has insisted for political reasons on maintaining the marketing cooperatives even while recognizing them as a technical and economic failure. This alternative marketing channel weakens the political and economic grip of the anti-socialist and anti-government merchants on the peasants. The merchants' profits and rate of capital investment have at least somewhat diminished; this seems to have been an objective of government policy since the merchants failed to invest sufficiently in light industry.

In contrast to the socialist farms, the production cooperatives made a small overall profit in the 1975-76 agricultural year. The Agrarian Revolution was not intended to result in an immediate increase in agricultural productivity. The problems of starting the production cooperatives actually caused a sharp decline in productivity, especially when large modern private farms were divided up. In the long run, however, productivity will probably increase. Unlike private investors and landowners who preferred to invest in commerce, industry or real estate, peasants have no such alternatives for their savings and may well use them to increase the forces of production. But even a modest increase in agricultural productivity will require large public expenditures.

The Agrarian Revolution has had one immediate positive economic effect. Easy credit facilities for cooperatives have led to an increased demand for Algerian-made agricultural equipment and fertilizers, thereby absorbing the overproduction of many new national industries.

POLITICAL IMPACT

The Agrarian Revolution is primarily a political and ideological operation, made possibly by agriculture's rather modest role in national development plans from a purely economic point of view. Although in the long run the Agrarian Revolution may enhance agriculture's role in national development, as an immediate effect, it is intended to weaken the economic and political position of the entrepreneurial bourgeoisie.¹⁸ It has created a loyal government clientele of about 150,000 peasant families, thereby curbing the political influence of the conservative rural and small-town bourgeoisie.¹⁹ The regime also hopes the Agrarian Revolution will help to reactivate the moribund National Liberation Front, the country's single political party. Neither the establishment of national administrative machinery nor the development of heavy industry lent themselves to grass-roots mobilization of political militants. By contrast, the Agrarian Revolution is implemented by local bodies consisting of elected Municipal Councils and an equal number of others drawn from NLF mass organizations: local party cells, the youth organization, the women's organization, the peasant union and the trade union. Thus, party activities at the local level are geared into an important practical task.

The government encourages city dwellers such as officials, workers, salaried employees and students to participate in volunteer projects, to visit and work in cooperatives. The student volunteer corps is by far the most important. In 1976, 10,000 of Algeria's 35,000 university students participated in it during the summer holidays. These student volunteers also act as unofficial inspectors, reporting directly to the provincial governor and the Ministry of Agriculture. Such unofficial

reports are an alternate channel of information from the reports of the local authorities, and have led to the exposure of technical errors and administrative abuses. The journalists of the semi-official newspaper *El Moudjahed* also independently produce critical articles on cooperatives and socialist villages. As a final check on administrative abuses, the President's office has its own supervision and information network of all developments concerning the Agrarian Revolution. Serious problems are thus brought directly to the attention of President Boumedienne. In some cases, peasants have shocked local authorities by writing complaints to the President and getting direct intervention in response.

The Agrarian Revolution is clearly a form of political mobilization, although it is doubtful whether this mobilization will stimulate participation in Party affairs. For most Algerians, the Agrarian Revolution is not a Party project but President Boumedienne's personal project, and it does not affect their view of the party so much as their support for Boumedienne as a political leader.²⁰

THE MYTH OF THE PEASANTRY

The Agrarian Revolution has led to a revival of the political myth of the peasant revolutionary and the idealization of peasant values abandoned after the failure of the socialist farms. The peasant myth has gained credence in its identification with the rural unemployed and underemployed, who provided the majority of combatants (and victims) during the war of independence. Official propaganda now represents the peasantry as an example of austerity, diligence, Islamic orthodoxy and Arab cultural authenticity, opposed to a more easy-going, comfort-loving, religiously lax and westernized urban life-style. Algeria's development plans are mainly based on industrialization and urbanization, to be financed by a rapid accumulation of social capital and by a relatively low level of private consumption in spite of increasing national prosperity. The peasant mythology reinforces such policy options by urging upon urban workers the peasant values of austerity, clean living and uncompromising nationalism. But the austere, hard working, orthodox and nationalistic peasant remains a political myth. The pauperization of the over-populated traditional agricultural sector during the colonial period made even the older rural population largely dependent on migrant labor.²¹ For elderly men, the peasant way of life has become a place of old-age retirement for the successful and a refuge for the incompetent and unsuccessful. This is also true for the younger generation who tend to see rural life, and employment in agriculture in particular, as an indication of social failure.

The peasants are generally religious, but their traditional folk religion is unorthodox and could be mobilized as an emotional surrogate for progressive social aspirations.²² Traditional forms of peasant cooperation were limited by the pervasive factionalism and rivalry between kinship groups. The peasants' values and lifestyle have been less westernized than those of most of the urban population, but the political result is regionalism as opposed to nationalism. Regionalist tendencies are reinforced by the heritage of autonomy that the local resistance networks enjoyed during the war of independence. These tendencies brought Algeria to the brink of civil war and dissolution during the first two years after independence* and are a potential danger to the regime, if mobilized by rival political factions either on the right or the left.

The Agrarian Revolution proposed to create a wholly new, untraditional type of peasantry and to inculcate the urban population with this new peasantry's value system. It will certainly not succeed in this over-ambitious task. But the immediate practical purposes of the Agrarian Revolution are rather modest and will probably be reached to some degree. On the ideological level, the beneficiaries of the Agrarian Revolution are in fact a new type of peasantry, linked to the central government in a way which is unique among rural groups. While peasants usually mistrust outside authorities, this new group tends to associate its advantages with the central government and the official ideology. On the other hand, it associates technical problems and administrative failures with the local bourgeoisie that still dominates the lower administrative echelons. Thus, a new alliance is growing between a part of the peasantry and the urban political class that dominates national policy. In its style of life, the new peasantry will probably adopt modern urban working class standards of comfort (while the workers will certainly not adopt peasant standards). As a sign, television sets are becoming a popular consumption item in the new socialist villages.

Left-wing urban opposition groups based among students and trade union activists have rallied to the government over the Agrarian Revolution. In return, the regime allows student activists to investigate and evaluate the land reform projects, and gives trade unions more influence in workers' councils to counterbalance the technocrats in charge of national industries. So the dominance of a "state bourgeoisie" of technocrats and administrators is somewhat weakened without increasing the influence of the private entrepreneurial bourgeoisie.

The Agrarian Revolution will not make Algeria a paradise on earth. Nor will it solve the country's major problems such as unemployment, bureaucratic inefficiency, and an inadequate distribution system. But in spite of its improvised organization and modest practical aims, the Agrarian Revolution has resulted in positive achievements and it may well lay the basis for progressive developments in the future as well.²³

*Regionalist troubles in the period immediately after independence were mainly made by former regional guerrilla leaders and their (by then) more or less professionalized armed retinues. Only in the Kabyle case was there a rather half-hearted attempt to mobilize the peasantry.

Footnotes

¹ Abandoned French industrial and service enterprises were also placed under the direction of workers' committees, but this *autogestion industrielle* never received much attention or support from the government. In fact, this sector consisted mainly of small workshops with only a few workers, without capital reserves and with few economic prospects. Most of them were sold to private Algerian entrepreneurs in later years. Big enterprises were only nationalized in later years and were never placed under a system of workers' self-management. Since the early 1970s, there has been an official system of workers' committees in Algerian state-owned industries, but these committees have only advisory and supervisory functions and do not participate actively in decision-making.

² The idea of the pure peasant revolution as opposed to the corrupted nationalism of the urban bourgeoisie was popularized by Fanon.

³ AARDES, *Etude industrie privée* (Alger: Secretariat d'Etat au Plan, 1975).

⁴ M. Raffinot and P. Jacquemot, *Le capitalisme d'état algérien* (Paris: Maspéro, 1977), p. 379.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 380

⁶ See for example AARDES, *Les circuits commerciaux de la viande*, (Alger: Secretariat d'Etat au Plan, 1973).

⁷ The intermediate sector developed in the colonial period between the Algerian "traditional" sector and the French "modern" sector. The intermediate sector was Algerian-owned, but employed some modern organization and means of production.

The Working Class Revolt in Tunisia

Nigel Disney

The end of January saw the biggest working class upheaval since Tunisia won independence in 1956. A general strike called by the half-million strong Union generale des travailleurs tunisiens (UGTT) was met with violence by the regime. Army, police and paramilitary units joined in a general offensive against the workers, leaving more than two hundred dead* and hundreds more injured and arrested. The strike was called to protest official attacks on the union as well as the regime's economic policies. It represented a sharp break between the unions and the ruling Destourian Socialist Party which have hitherto worked closely together. A growing economic crisis, marking the end of a long period of relative prosperity, has coincided with a political crisis over the succession to Tunisia's ailing ruler, Habib Bourguiba.

Although the regime has blamed the strikers for the violence, there is increasing evidence that clashes were provoked by the regime in order to carry out a campaign of repression. It warned personnel of the American and French embassies in Tunis not to go to work on the day of the general strike in case of "violent activities" and apparently briefed American and French officials on the tactics it was planning to use. Residents of Tunis also picked up police communications which referred to a planned escalation of violence. Many also claim that the riots were started by youngsters who were paid by the Destour Party to break windows and wreck cars to provide a pretext for army intervention.

The number of persons injured in the events numbered in the thousands; some 1600 were arrested, over 300 were given jail sentences of up to seven years, and more than 100 continue to be held without charges. The unchecked brutality of the repression is exemplified by the fact that many of those shot were young children playing innocently in the streets. On the day of the general strike and the day after, Tunisian army

helicopter gunships fired without warning on anything that seemed from the air to be a public gathering.

The events confirmed the existence of an armed militia belonging to the Destour Party. Destour Director Muhammed Sayyah apparently formed this militia believing that police forces were not sufficient for strike-breaking or other "emergency" situations. This militia, made up of young Destour Party members, had only been rumored before. It emerged as a major force working parallel to the secret police and generally inciting to violence. Many civilian and even military deaths are attributed to the actions of the militia. The militia wore plain clothes during the events but emerged afterwards in green uniforms, sometimes patrolling the streets with regular police officers. Sayyah has subsequently confirmed the existence of the militia, admitting in a March 1, 1978 interview in *Jeune Afrique* that a group of 500 assisted the armed forces in re-establishing order in Tunis. It has been estimated, however, that the militia numbers closer to 2,500.

Such extreme measures by the regime and the ruling party suggest the power of an independent working class movement in Tunisia. In fact, Tunisian workers have a long history of militant struggle. The first union, the Confederation generale tunisienne du travail, was founded in 1924 after a dock strike in Tunis which had nation wide repercussions. The UGTT was formed in 1946 through a fusion of already existing unions, but it moved to the right during the period of the struggle for national independence. The UGTT left the communist-oriented World Federation of Trade Unions in 1951, only a year after joining it, and adhered instead to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. Through this body the UGTT leadership forged close links with the American Federation of Labor, links which persist to this day.*

*The regime has admitted to a death toll of more than 100 and some estimates range as high as 500. One reliable source, close to the Ministry of Health, put the figure at 227.

*After the arrest of UGTT leader Habib Achour, AFL-CIO chief George Meany asked President Carter to inform the Tunisian government of the AFL-CIO's "abhorrence" at the actions of the Tunisian government.



Mass protest on January 26 in Tunis

The UGTT has been an important segment of the Tunisian power structure since independence. Until January, union head Habib Achour was a member of the Political Bureau of the Destour Party. The UGTT has acted as a "transmission belt" for the policies of Bourguiba—its role has been as much to control the workers as to defend their interests. Nonetheless strikes have been on the increase since 1973. There were 215 strikes in 1973 involving 18,000 workers. By 1976 the number of strikes had risen to 369, involving 94,000 workers. The strikes were usually either to demand wage increases or to protest unfair dismissals. Many were wildcat strikes, without the support of the UGTT, and strikers were sometimes imprisoned. In May 1976 one group of strikers demonstrated outside the headquarters of the UGTT over the lack of support from the union leadership, chanting "Achour, murderer!"

A new wave of strikes began last October, with 1,200 textile workers in Ksar Hellal who struck against the appointment of a new manager from outside the area. Some of the strikers occupied the factory and were ejected by the police. A wider political confrontation then developed when the people of Ksar Hellal took to the streets to protest the arrests of workers who had led the occupation. Soon the Tunisian army intervened, brutally suppressing the demonstrators who fought back with a ferocity reminiscent of the days of the struggle for independence. The demonstrators, including women and children, threw stones at the soldiers, laid oil slicks for their vehicles and even set a trap for one of their tanks. In the midst of the fighting, people shouted: "The Destour Party was born here and shall die here." The government concluded from the events of Ksar Hellal that Interior Minister Tahar Belkhaja had been wrong in advocating tactics of negotiation with opposition forces. Belkhaja was ousted from his post and the government adopted an increasingly hard line.

In November, 13,000 phosphate miners struck. Their demands included implementation of a 1966 law giving them 20 percent of the profits of the mines. At the end of Decem-

ber, the government conceded some of their demands under the threat of an indefinite strike. No sooner had this strike been settled than 6,000 agricultural workers struck for 48 hours.

These strikes received only lukewarm support from the UGTT's leadership. In January 1977, it had signed a "social contract" with the government to insure social stability during the 1977-1982 five-year plan. The minimum wage was raised by 33 percent, and the government pledged to stabilize the price of certain basic commodities. In return, Achour agreed to carry out a campaign to increase production and to see that the plan's targets were reached. The signing of the "social contract" did not receive the unanimous support of the UGTT membership. At the UGTT Congress in March 1977, a petition with 600 signatures was circulated rejecting the "social contract" and condemning the leadership for signing the contract without consulting the membership "in violation of the most elementary principles of trade union democracy."

The response of the UGTT leadership to the strike wave at the end of 1977 was to issue a communique in November warning the government that it had eight weeks in which to satisfy the demands of the union. Unless these demands were met, the UGTT would meet in early January to decide on further action. It was clear to the government that a major confrontation with the unions was on the horizon.

But the government could not agree on a response. It was split between those who wanted to take the hard line of repression and those who wanted a degree of liberalization in the country. Some faltering steps had already been taken towards greater democracy in Tunisia. In May 1977, a Tunisian Human Rights League had been authorized by the government and had subsequently been allowed to investigate conditions in prisons. Mohammad Masmoudi, the former foreign minister in exile after a 1974 abortive attempt at unification with Libya, was allowed to return home in December.

By the end of the year, the government signalled it had opted for a hard line by firing Tahar Belkhaja, Interior Minister



Burial of January 26 victims

for the past two years who had urged policies of moderation in dealing with strikers. This represented a victory for Prime Minister Hedi Nouira, thought to be Bourguiba's most likely successor, and other hard-liners in the government such as Defense Minister Abdallah Farhat. It was especially a victory for right-wing Destour Party Director Sayyah who had pushed hard for a change in policy and had simultaneously created the new party militia to strengthen his hand.

Events moved rapidly after the cabinet crisis. Sayyah's militia began physical attacks against trade unionists and even occupied some regional union headquarters. A number of union leaders were harassed and arrested. The UGTT's national council met on January 8-10 and passed a resolution charging that under Nouira the country "is oriented towards the consolidation by all possible means of a capitalist class which is contrary to the national interest, especially because this class links its interests to exploitative foreign capital." Achour announced his resignation from the Political Bureau of the Destour Party, breaking a 40-year link between the party and the trade union movement.

On January 22, the UGTT decided on a general strike as a warning to the government in response "to demands from the base who are beginning to lose patience, faced with the provocations aimed at the UGTT." The strike occurred on January 26, revealing the full extent of the government's policy of non-conciliation. While the army, police and militia attacked the workers in the streets, the government moved to decapitate the UGTT, arresting Achour and all but two members of the confederation's executive. Predictably the government put the blame for the trouble on communists, Baathists and agitators linked to Libya.

For the first time since independence, a curfew was ordered and kept in effect for over a month. The UGTT newspaper *Ash-Sha'ab*, which had been highly critical of government policies before the events, was brought under control when its editor Hassan Hamoudia was arrested; numerous

reporters quit in protest and the paper was put under close supervision by the new union leadership.

In the media vacuum created by the official repression (which included even a ban on the sale of *Le Monde*), a new weekly newspaper *Ar-Ra'yy* (The Opinion) encountered great success. Voice of the most conservative faction of the opposition, led by lawyer and former minister Ahmed Mestiri, *Ar-Ra'yy* had appeared shortly before the events and gained a modest circulation. After a brief prohibition, it reappeared and its circulation rose to a healthy 50,000. People quickly snatched *Ar-Ra'yy* off the stands, consuming avidly even the cautious opposition of Mestiri's neo-nationalist social democracy.

At the end of February, the government installed a new leadership in the UGTT at a special congress called for that purpose. But its problems are far from over. Achour is a popular figure and if the government goes ahead with a treason trial as planned, it could spark further protests. Even though the government now controls the UGTT leadership, the sources of discontent among the rank and file workers remain or have worsened.

The government actions have also forged a link of solidarity between workers and students. Despite warnings from the Minister of Education, many university and secondary school students went on strike to protest the official violence in the January events. A number of the striking students were arrested and some had their scholarships taken away or were thrown out of the university. The results of this struggle were a Pyrrhic victory for the government, for although the student strikes were ended, student opposition to the regime only intensified.

The government's latest plans, announced at the beginning of March, suggest it is fearful of further unrest. It intends to conscript all unemployed men between 18 and 30 into a special labor corps. They will be paid the minimum industrial or agricultural wage and will be treated as soldiers. Most significantly they will not be allowed to join a union.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN MOROCCO AND TUNISIA: A Critique of State Department Findings

Eqbal Ahmad and Stuart Schaar

Human rights is an issue which should preoccupy all progressive people. The issue has predictably become a Pandora's box for the United States, which supports some of the most reactionary and repressive regimes in the world. By expanding economic and military aid to client states with repressive governments, the US promotes human rights violations on a world scale. Citizens who question official policies and offer alternative solutions in these states are often arrested, tortured and at times assassinated by police and army officers, many of whom received training from US experts.

In the most cynical fashion, the US President and his spokespeople continuously decry the human rights situations of their adversaries, while treating with kid gloves gross offenders who are allies. Just as cynically, they place their stamp of approval on the State Department's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* in 105 states (February 3, 1978) which glosses over or simply ignores the human rights violations committed by US-backed regimes. A March 1978 counter-report issued by the Washington-based Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy fills in some omitted details and criticizes the State Department's survey. The following are the Moroccan and Tunisian critiques incorporated in the Coalition's rebuttal which we are reproducing with minor changes for MERIP readers. Morocco and Tunisia are countries which are receiving a high and increasing level of US economic and military aid and have functioned as dependable US allies in Middle East and African politics.



MOROCCO

The State Department report on Morocco describes a fairly open society with a pluralistic party system, a functioning trade union movement, freedom of the press and religion, etc. This is superficially accurate. But in describing the Hassan government's dealing with a small but consistently growing radical socialist movement, the report obscures a very serious situation by overt omissions and by minimizing severe problems and maximizing the effects of small changes.

It is true that several opposition parties have seen more than fifteen years of repression against them partially lifted in return for support for the government, particularly in its war in the former Spanish Sahara. But the political and student groupings which remain outside this consensus have been experiencing an intensified repression. Generally known as the *Frontistes*, they are Marxists who favor the establishment of a republic and openly support self-determination in the Sahara. According to Amnesty International's October 1977 Briefing on Morocco, upwards of 300 *Frontistes* were arrested in June 1977. It is against the treatment of formations like the *Frontistes* that the State Department's claim of a "strengthening of democratic institutions" must be judged.

TORTURE. The report states that since the early 1970s overt police terror against political detainees has abated and that upper echelons of the government do not condone the use of violence against prisoners. Yet since at least 1962-63, Moroccan police have employed torture against political prisoners, and

the practice is so wide-spread that it is taken for granted as a major risk of opposition politics. Amnesty's October report comments on reports of torture: "The consistency of these reports indicates that torture is routine security police practice during the interrogation of political detainees. It is inflicted mainly to terrify and humiliate the detainees, but also to extract confessions and gain information about their political activities and associates."

In reaching its conclusion that torture has abated, the State Department report ignored Amnesty International's 1977 Annual Report that stated: "Persistent rumors suggest that a number of detainees (from the June, 1977 arrests) may have died as a result of torture during interrogation by security police."

A very serious concern is the State Department's treatment of Amnesty's report that 14 persons had died under torture and that others had been disabled when detained in the early 1970s. The State Department says that it cannot verify these allegations and that Amnesty's information was gained from King Hassan's opponents who have much to gain from "discrediting the government." It should be noted that Amnesty is cited frequently in other country reports as an authoritative source. And in addition, Amnesty was sufficiently confident of its conclusions to organize an international campaign in the Fall of 1977 to demand an inquiry into the behavior of the Moroccan police. But the charge is even more reprehensible because it implies that the only credible source of information on torture is the government that is doing the torturing.

ARBITRARY ARREST AND DENIAL OF A FAIR PUBLIC TRIAL. The State Department says that "persons detained since 1971 for anti-government activities have been tried in open court." This assertion about open trials overlooks several key points. First, not all those arrested for political reasons get any kind of trial; everyone in the political milieu of Rabat and Casablanca knows of the existence of special services in the police which have the power to act without judicial restraints. People disappear, legal records never exist, and the Ministry of Justice can quite plausibly deny a person was ever detained.

Second, prisoners have been held incommunicado for months and even years before appearing in court, a flagrant violation of Article 82 of the Moroccan Code of Penal Procedure. According to Amnesty International's October 1977 Briefing, "Probably at any given time in Morocco several hundred people are being held, in police detention centers, incommunicado and without proper legal procedures having been followed." Finally, the assertion masks the fact that political prisoners in Casablanca had to wage a series of hunger strikes and other protests in order to win the release of 104 and the right to a trial for 139 others early in 1977.

Regarding this round of trials (January-February 1977), the State Department notes Amnesty's contention that in court the defendant's right to testify, to be presented with the charges against them, and to have unimpeded right to counsel were denied. In fact, according to Amnesty International's 1977 Report, the trials were even worse: the defendants were actually removed from the courtroom for protesting the above with silence and were convicted of conspiring to overthrow the government by violent means on the evidentiary basis of the possession of pamphlets, typewriters and a printing press. Forty-four were condemned to life in prison, of whom 35 were tried in absentia. The rest received penalties ranging from

5-30 years; all received an additional two years for protesting the method by which they were tried. Again in May and June 1977 hundreds of *Frontistes* were arrested. Following further prison hunger strikes another set of trials for about 100 of these prisoners has been set for Spring 1978.

In the past when opponents of the regime were arrested, tortured—or, like El-Mehdi Ben Barka, assassinated—the opposition parties had internal and external networks of supporters to highlight their plight and succeeded in making international opinion aware of their condition. Those now under attack do not have a comparable support network at their disposal and therefore the authorities have dealt with them brutally. Recently Information Minister Muhammad Larbi Khattabi admitted that arrests of *Frontistes* should be seen as preventive acts: "it was necessary to imprison them *before* they undertook any criminal or terrorist activities." (Quoted in *The Middle East* (London), no. 42, April 1978, p. 31, emphasis added.) As we have shown above, people who hold certain political beliefs and oppose Moroccan foreign policy continue to be ruthlessly oppressed.

TUNISIA

Like their findings on Morocco, the State Department's report on human rights in Tunisia attempts to show an improving situation when in fact the opposite is true. Although it is not within the time frame of the report, the violently repressed nationwide general strike of January 26, 1978 confirms that the general tendency is toward increasing levels of internal conflict, a tendency which is bound to lead to a continuing deterioration of the human rights situation.

In terms of basic human rights—freedom from the threat of torture, inhuman treatment or arbitrary arrest—the situation in Tunisia has been mild by comparison with Iran, but it has also clearly worsened. The use of torture to prepare show trials, to instill fear in the opposition, and to stem growing dissidence is becoming commonplace and has been confirmed by such groups as Amnesty International.

The State Department's report effectively belies the claim that the Tunisian government is "working to maintain" a democratic system. For example, does a government "working to maintain" democracy also, as the report notes, "discourag[e], through its control of the paper supply, the preparation and circulation of printed material not conforming to government policy"? Is it one which "usually denies permission to hold public political meetings critical of the party or established institutions"? Or is it one which does not harass political activists only if they "confine themselves to verbal expressions of their views in private"?

What kind of setting is Tunisia for democratic development if the ruling Destourian Socialist Party employs some 2,000-2,500 men as a para-military force which is immune to judicial review or legal restraints? For several years some of them have been assigned to the University as "vigiles" (a combination of guards and monitors) who terrorize students opposed to the regime or even to the presence of the "vigiles" on campus. At the end of 1977 and the beginning of 1978, groups of this party militia attacked trade unionists and their regional headquarters, acts which helped precipitate the general strike on January 26. Since then they have been seen in uniform patrolling the streets of Tunis, and for the first time their presence has been officially recognized.

Just as detrimental to human rights in Tunisia are state-

ments and actions of the country's President-for-life, Habib Bourguiba. Four years ago he decorated two men who, according to his *public* testimony, "did Tunisia a great service" in 1961 by killing his political opponent, Salah Ben Youssef in Frankfurt, Germany. (See *Le Monde*, January 25, 1974). Those elements in the Destourian Socialist Party and the government who are most prone to criminal, extra-legal violence as an instrument for dealing with rivals and for suppressing dissent could only derive legitimacy and encouragement from such statements and acts by a Chief-of-State. In the Fall of 1977, Habib Achour, Secretary General of the Tunisian Trade Union Federation (UGTT), accused one of the decorated assassins of waving a revolver in a restaurant and bragging about a new assignment: the assassination of Mr. Achour. (See *Jeune Afrique*, #880, November 18, 1977, p. 25.) Mr. Achour has been in jail since January 26, awaiting trial on treason charges with a possible death penalty, while the gun-waving assassin enjoys his freedom.

TORTURE AND CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT. The report states that torture and cruel mistreatment of prisoners have been frequently alleged, but that the US government has no evidence to confirm these allegations. Amnesty International sections in France, however, reported several cases of torture following a wave of arrests in March 1977. A report from the Swiss Human Rights League, which sent observers to the trials following these arrests, concluded that "the use of torture is widespread and systematic" and listed seven different kinds of torture practiced on prisoners. Moritz Leuenberger, a member of the Zurich Bar who also attended the trials, likewise reported eight methods of torture used. Leuenberger cited the following remark by the judge when prisoners attempted to show him marks of torture on their bodies: "You did not confess and that means you were not tortured. Anyone tortured always confesses."

ARBITRARY ARREST OR IMPRISONMENT. This section elevates bureaucratic doubletalk to new heights. In general the report asserts that the Tunisian Constitution guarantees a wide range of political, religious and individual rights, and that the Tunisian government generally respects the Constitution. The section on arbitrary arrest and imprisonment confines itself to a single, authoritative-sounding statement: "All persons presently imprisoned are accused of, or have been convicted of, committing some act proscribed by Tunisian law." Left unreported is the fact that the Constitution and the laws are very different, and that no judicial authority exists in Tunisia with

the power to rule on the constitutionality of laws—even if they contradict the Constitution.

Thus, the Constitution guarantees the right of association, but the law says any new grouping must receive prior approval from the Ministry of Interior before functioning. Refusal is the rule and approval the exception. The Constitution guarantees freedom of movement, but the law gives the Prime Minister the power to withhold passports for foreign travel if the exit might be "harmful to the good reputation of Tunisia." The State Department report therefore errs in stating that "there are no legal or other restrictions on movement within the country, foreign travel, or emigration." The Constitution likewise guarantees freedom of expression but the 1975 press law makes "offending the President of the Republic or any member of the government" punishable by five years in jail. Writing or stating anything defamatory to *any public official* is punishable by three years. Mere possession of tracts or any foreign publication deemed harmful to public order is punishable by up to five years. Many Tunisians have been jailed under these laws.

ATTITUDE OF THE GOVERNMENT TOWARD BEING INVESTIGATED. The report states that the Tunisian government's invitation to members of the League of Human Rights to investigate prison conditions "illustrates Tunisia's encouraging policy in this regard." The facts lead to other conclusions. The League's investigation was prompted by requests from the wives of the March 1977 prisoners for an inquiry into their husbands' allegations of torture. Neither the Minister of Interior nor the judge in the case would allow League doctors to interview the prisoners, so there could be no first-hand determination of what had happened. From interviews with the lawyers and from attending court sessions, the League was able to report what had already been published in the foreign press—that a number of prisoners publicly denounced being tortured during interrogation and said that they had been subjected to various psychological and physical stresses from which they still suffered. The League concluded its August 12, 1977 report by saying that "the attitude of the public power in this matter . . . leaves a legitimate suspicion" (that torture and violence were employed), and by denouncing the uncooperativeness of the government.

At a time when authoritarian forces within Tunisia control the government and are attempting to assure their survival, human rights violations are multiplying and will continue to grow. The opposition in Tunisia, from left to center, has made violations of human rights a central point of their struggle to change the regime.



Street arrests in Tunis



Torture center in Casablanca

Economic Decline in Oman

PFLO's New Political Strategy

Fred Halliday

The Sultanate of Oman has slipped out of the news headlines over the past two years. Thus, little is generally known about the present situation in that country. The following analysis is based on information from the Western press, and from discussions in Aden with representatives of the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO), the guerrilla organization that has been fighting the Omani regime since 1965. The analysis may, in some degree, be unwelcome to those in Europe and the US who support the struggle of the Omani people, and who claim the guerrilla struggle continues unabated; but I believe that it is only through a rigorous search for the reality in Oman, not the perpetuation of myth, that a proper solidarity campaign can be built.

THE MILITARY SITUATION

The first point made in discussion with the PFLO is that the Iranian and British military presences in Oman continue, despite attempts by both Tehran and London to play them down. Between 1,000 and 1,500 Iranians remain in the country. In Dhofar, there are Iranian troops at Heirun near the Yemeni border (at a base code-named "Manston" by the Sultan). There are Iranian Phantom jets about 100 miles from the Yemeni frontier at the desert airbase of Thamrit, built in 1973-74 at the Shah's request. Iranian naval and land forces are also stationed on the northern coast at Khasab, a position from which they patrol the waters of the Gulf and the 26-mile wide Straits of Hormuz, the strategic waterway through which tankers leave the Gulf. The PFLO believes that Iran is pushing the Sultan into fomenting a border dispute with neighboring Ras al-Kheimah, with the ultimate goal of annexing it, giving Iran a position from which to extend its naval domination of the Gulf.

The British have not pulled out, despite their loss of Masirah, the island airbase evacuated in March 1977.¹ Some 200 men "seconded" from the British armed forces, and another 425 British mercenaries still run the Sultan's 15,000-strong armed forces. The two most powerful men in the country are reputed to be Major Tim Landen, a former intelligence officer and now the Sultan's aide-de-camp; and Tony Ashworth, a propaganda specialist from the Foreign Office who is working in the Omani Ministry of Information and is responsible for briefing visiting foreign journalists.² The commander of the army in Dhofar is Brigadier Charles Huxtable. The head of the civil development program in the province, aimed at extending government control into the mountains, is Martin Robb, a former officer in the Special Air Services, a counter-insurgency force.

Beyond the physical presence of these forces there is a base and command structure ready to receive additional forces if necessary. In this sense, the number of foreign troops actually in Oman understates the room Iran and Britain have for manoeuvre. The Shah confirmed in a November 1977 *Newsweek* interview that Iran can now move six battalions with tanks across the Gulf in two to three hours. There is here a certain analogy with the French military role in Mauritania and the Western Sahara. The actual number of French military in Mauritania is only about 120, but the decisive French military role is given by its air force, stationed in Senegal, a quarter of an hour's flying time by jet, and less than an hour by transport plane.³ Modern military techniques reduce the need to station forces inside the dominated country.

PFLO

For its part, the PFLO was forced onto the defensive by the massive intervention of Iranian troops in 1973-1975 and has had to abandon the positions it once held in the Dhofar mountains. As one official explained: "It is not now a war of liberation or even a guerrilla war. It is a campaign of resistance. There are sporadic actions from time to time, and this is a form of resistance to the Iranian occupation. But it is not a consistent campaign."

Between 300 and 500 fighters retreated across the Yemeni border in 1975, and there are about 800 refugee families living in camps and schools organized by the Front in Democratic Yemen. In the People's Primary School and the June 9 Intermediate School there are 500 pupils, and the Front also runs the Fatima Ghanama hospital, a 50-bed installation named after an 18-year old woman guerrilla, killed in a 1973 clash with government forces at Sadh, in eastern Dhofar. The Front also has a 45-minute radio program from Aden every evening. On a night I listened, there was a talk on how the Sultan is giving money to tribal leaders to win them over, a talk on the Omani empire in the eighteenth century, a report on coverage of Oman in the Libyan press, a number of poems and songs, and a short talk in Persian, addressed to the Iranian personnel stationed in Oman, explaining the aims of the revolutionary movement.

The PFLO is especially insistent on the continued support it receives from the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY). There has been no apparent let-up in this commitment, despite rumors put out by Saudi Arabia that the price of diplomatic relations, established with Aden in March 1976, was an end to Yemeni support for the Omani revolutionaries. In speeches such as that of PDRY President Salem Robea Ali

to the UN General Assembly in October 1977, the Yemenis have underlined their opposition to the Sultan's regime.

Yemeni Foreign Minister Mohammad Saleh Motieh told me that the PDRY would open links to Oman only when all British and Iranian troops had withdrawn, and when an agreement between the Sultan and the PFLO had been reached. Indeed, far from there being a sellout, Saudi hostility has recently increased as a result of Yemen's stand on Oman, and its position on the Horn of Africa dispute. Saudi aid projects to PDRY have been cancelled, and there have been armed clashes along the Yemeni-Saudi border, the first since 1973.

PFLO is now intent on developing its political struggle throughout Oman, rather than just the military activity in Dhofar. It estimates that around 300 political prisoners are held in the Sultan's jails, some of them arrested in June 1977. The PFLO has maintained close relations with other sections of the opposition in the Gulf, despite the July 1974 dissolution of the Peoples Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf (PFLOAG), the unified Gulf political front. It is now working towards a new united front of groups in the Arabian Peninsula countries directed against the monarchs and sheikhs of the region. This front would include the two underground groups in Bahrain (the People's Front in Bahrain, and the National Liberation Front), the Kuwaiti Democrats, the Labor Party and the Democratic Party in Saudi Arabia, and the seven North Yemeni groups who last August came together to form a new unified National Democratic Front. Of these the majority are, like PFLO, former left-wing nationalists who radicalized in the 1960s, although there are communists in the North Yemeni front, and the Bahraini National Liberation Front is also communist. The one significant group not so far included in this movement is the recently-formed Saudi Arabian Communist Party.

The PFLO is also continuing to try to increase its international support. Iraq, which established diplomatic relations with Oman in December 1975 (following the reconciliation with Iran in March), still allows the Front to maintain an office in Baghdad and to publicize its activities there. Iraq does not aid the PFLO in a consistent way, and it is involved in substantial negotiations with other Gulf states, including Iran and Bahrain, on the maintenance of "Gulf security" in the region. The PFLO is given some diplomatic support by the Soviet Union. Surprisingly, despite Chinese support for the Shah of Iran's campaign against "subversion" in the region, PFLO claims it still has some low-level contact with the Chinese.

The Front has a clear position on the Horn of Africa dispute, one distinct from Democratic Yemen's. In the past, it had close relations with the Eritrean movement and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party. PFLO officials have more recently visited Ethiopia and held discussions with Derg members. The PFLO supports the general aims of the Ethiopian revolution, but insists on the right of Eritrea to self-determination, *including independence*. The Front believes that when the Derg came to power in 1974 it was not responsible for the policies of the previous imperial regims, and could have solved Ethiopia's nationality problems, but this opportunity was not taken.

The prospect which the Front now faces in Oman is one of protracted organizational construction. For the past year PFLO officials have been emphasizing the need for a three-fold preparation—"intellectually, politically, militarily." The Front has lost the military foothold it once had in southern Oman, but this was never, in itself, capable of giving the revolutionaries the base they need in the more important northern part of the country where 600,000 out of the 750,000 people of Oman live. Separated by 500 miles of desert and by differences in culture, Dhofar was an inappropriate springboard for extending revolution into the Omani heartlands.

The guerrillas were able to make the advances they did in Dhofar because of two basic factors: the revolutionary wave in southern Arabia that began with the North Yemeni revolution of 1962 and spread into South Yemen and Dhofar; and the ramshackle character of the Omani state. Both these conditions have altered: the Anglo-Iranian intervention, plus the deployment of oil revenues to strengthen the Omani state, have transformed the context in which PFLO operates.⁴ Yet if the old opportunities are no longer there, new and in some ways more promising perspectives are opening up as a result of the unstable condition of northern Oman. The elements of a future crisis of the Omani Sultanate can already be discerned in the present economic and social conditions. It is these which may provide the context for future political work.

OIL REVENUES DECLINE

Although Oman was the last country in the Middle East to start exporting oil—it began only in 1967—it now appears that it will be the first in which oil output will decline to negligible proportions. Bahrain has the lowest output in the region, and is already dependent on imports of Saudi oil, on other industrial activities, and on services for its prosperity. Both Iran and Algeria will run low on oil some time in the 1990s. But in Oman the crisis is already coming; after less than a decade and a half of substantial oil output the country will have to face the problems of a post-oil development.

Oil output reached its peak of 365,000 barrels a day in 1976, and is expected to fall to 290,000 barrels in 1978, and to 212,000 in 1981. Beyond then, oil company officials are not prepared to predict. Oil revenues, which now make up over 90 percent of the state's revenue, rose from Omani Rials (OR) 20.6 million in 1970, to OR 91.7 million in 1973, and to OR 454.7 million in 1976. But since 1975, with continuing overspending, Oman is running a budget deficit which rose to an estimated OR 56 million in 1977.⁵ To meet this problem, the state is allegedly taking three initiatives: trying to find new oil sources; getting more development aid from other oil states; and trying to develop the non-oil sectors of the economy. It is, of course, the last which poses the greatest difficulties but which is also the most essential.

Until now oil output has been concentrated in nine fields in the desert area of northern Oman. But output here has peaked, and Shell Oil Company engineers are trying to remedy the situation by secondary recovery, involving the pumping of water and gas into the oil deposits. This northern Omani output is in the hands of Petroleum Development Oman Ltd. (PDO), a subsidiary of the old Iraq Petroleum Company. The Omani government has a 60 percent share, Shell 34 percent, Compagnie Francaise des Petroles 4 percent, and the Gulbenkian interests 2 percent. A number of other companies have been granted concessions in the country, including the German firm Deminex, the French Elf-Erap, the Italian Agip, and the U.S. firm Quintana.

So far the only new wells discovered are Dhofar, where PDO has begun work at two new fields, Amal and Marmul, in the desert northeast of Salalah, the provincial capital. Output is scheduled to reach a maximum level of 15,000 barrels per day by 1979, but a new 60,000 b/d pipeline is being built to the Dhofari coast in the hope that more fields will be found. Agip and Deminex are exploring in the western and south-western parts of Dhofar, using British Petroleum as the operating company. So far they have found nothing. The trouble with this oil from Dhofar is that the cost of producing it will be extremely high—around \$10 per barrel. Moreover, output is so far of a relatively low level and will go only a small way to compensate for the fall in production in the much more plentiful northern fields.

Given the shortfall in oil output, the Omani government

has begun to borrow heavily from other oil states as part of its development program. Grants from abroad have risen from an estimated OR 8.3 million in 1974 to OR 144 million in 1977, while loans ran at OR 77 million in 1977. These capital inflows now make up over 20 percent of total government receipts—a situation unique in a Middle East oil producing state. The chief donors to Oman are Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Abu Dhabi. Saudi Arabia gave the first big loan of \$100 million in 1975 and is now providing a substantial amount of state-to-state financing. This includes a \$100 million loan for aid in developing copper mining, a \$95 million loan for developing Dhofar and \$250 million in grant aid, mostly for defense. Kuwaiti financing, public and private, is involved in developing brick and cement factories. This increased foreign money inflow has helped to alleviate Oman's current budget problems, but it has inevitably led to an increased dependence on foreign funds and the problem of debt rescheduling faced by most non-oil developing countries. In 1977 debt servicing and loan repayment rose by 300 percent to OR 93 million—equal to over two-thirds of all the foreign finance flowing into the country.

The only way for Oman to avoid its problems in the long term is to develop other areas of the economy. Despite official statements, the record so far has been one of failure. The construction boom collapsed after 1974, and it is now reckoned that up to 30 percent of the new housing in and around the capital of Muscat is lying empty. Banks are no longer interested in lending money for property development.

So far, industrial projects are few. Only one factory has opened in seven years—a flour mill in Matrah. A cement factory is planned with an output of around one million tons a year, 500,000 tons of it for export to Kuwait. This year a new gas pipeline from the interior fields to the capital will be opened, after construction by Snamprogetti, an Italian firm. Some of this gas will be used for a copper smelting project at Sohar, which is being set up with a 75 percent government share and the rest owned by two North American companies. With estimated reserves of 17 million tons, Oman should be exporting around 20,000 tons of copper by 1980.

But the only real hope for Omani economic development lies in agriculture and fishing, two areas until now neglected. Statistics suggest that agricultural output has been rising at less than three percent since 1970—barely keeping pace with the population increase and in no way adequate to meeting the demand as incomes rise. Food demand in Oman is probably rising at over 10 percent annually, and food makes up 12 percent of all imports.

ECONOMIC DISASTER

The neglect of agriculture can be seen from the fact that while it employs around 70 percent of the active labor force, it provides only 2.5 percent of the GNP. The government is now trying to boost agricultural incomes and investment to help develop the countryside. Over half of the OR 26.6 million scheduled for agriculture under the current 1976-1980 plan is going to irrigation and water projects, and some commercial agriculture is beginning to emerge. But the first seven years of "modernization" have seriously depleted Oman's scarce water resources, and may have damaged them irrevocably, while a prestige desalination plant has been built, providing water at five times the necessary cost.

Fishing is an area where considerable expansion is possible, but little progress has been made despite the presence in Oman since 1971 of the US fishing firm Mardela. Sardine output, for example, could rise from 40,000 tons to 600,000 tons per year; and there are believed to be 48 types of edible fish off the Oman coast. A program of mechanization is now underway, with new trawlers and outboard motors being introduced to fisherman who have always relied on their small oar-powered *huris*.

Oman has certainly been transformed from the isolated and totally undeveloped conditions of ten years ago. It now has a modern communications system and far more schools and medical centers. The PFLO too realizes these changes. As one Front official put it: "Dhofar today is not the same place it was when we began our revolution. It is not even the same place it was three or four years ago. And we must take this into account." Nowhere has this modernization been clearer than in the armed forces, which have gone from 2,500 in 1970 to 15,000 in 1977, with an even greater qualitative rise in terms of weaponry, organization and experience.

On the other hand, this economic change has been a disaster for the Omani people. It has wasted the short-lived opportunity which oil provided. Virtually nothing has been done to prepare Oman for the day when oil runs out, and the country has been saddled with debts and a new grasping ruling class that has profited from the oil boom. Moreover, the decline of agriculture has been compounded by the misallocation of development monies: 80 percent of the post-1970 investment has been in the Muscat-Matrah area. There has been a spectacular increase in income inequality, with the majority of Omanis receiving only a small share of the new wealth.

Labor has also become a substantial problem. There is an estimated total labor force of 132,000, of whom no less than 65,000 are foreign employees. Apart from the several thousand British, the majority are impoverished immigrants from Pakistan and India. This pattern of employment is associated with two problems. First, the regime has encouraged the import of labor rather than the use and training of Omanis in order to maintain a working class that is politically manageable. A further lost opportunity has been the failure to give Omanis new skills through maximum self-reliant use of local labor. Half the civil service is still illiterate. Secondly, the import of labor has been accompanied by substantial abuses. Recent reports in the Indian press exposed the brutal treatment of Indian workers by Cypriot contractors, the unsanitary housing conditions and lack of proper pay. In another case 2,500 Indians were reported held in a concentration camp near Muscat after being brought to Oman by fraudulent promises of a job.

Large amounts of money have been wasted on prestige projects—the Sultan's five palaces, the international airport at Sib, color television, a huge police stadium used for parades on the Sultan's birthday. Above all, up to 50 percent of expenditure is for "defense"—for maintaining the key state institutions of army and police and for purchasing expensive equipment from abroad. A new air defense system purchased from Britain is now being installed. The most damning critique of the regime's economic and governmental system is that of John Townsend, economic adviser to the Sultan between 1972 and 1975. In his recent study, Townsend writes that there is "no control other than the will of an impulsive man and the deviousness of one or two ministers with self-interest at heart."⁶ As Townsend documents, the Omani state is dominated by the Sultan himself, who has no coherent economic policy, and a clique of advisers and relatives.

Within a few years the Omani regime will be in serious trouble. It has only one option: to become increasingly dependent on foreign support—on the Saudis who can provide money but no troops, and on Iran which can provide the troops but is reluctant and increasingly unable to provide money. The country will come to resemble North Yemen, a poor Arabian state with a neglected agriculture and dominated by the oil-producing regimes. After the decade of counter-revolutionary stabilization that began in 1970, Oman will be entering a new period in which there will be renewed need for revolutionary activity. In this perspective, the PFLO and others in Oman hostile to the Sultan will have definite political opportunities, distinct from, but in their own way comparable to, those which produced earlier popular resistance.

While it is too early and there is too little information to make accurate predictions, it is possible to state in outline what the two most likely forms of political conflict are going to be. On the one hand, there is bound to be a growing disaffection within the state which has been held together by oil revenues and the easy prosperity they bring. The civil servants, merchants, royal relatives and returning graduates now working with Sultan Qabus will be less likely to do so once the oil revenues have started falling. Similarly the tribes of the northern interior, and those that have gone over to Qabus in Dhofar, will remain loyal only so long as they judge him to be economically and politically strong. The decomposition of the hastily "modernized" and hastily assembled state is therefore a probable consequence of the economic course Oman is taking.

On the other hand, popular resentment is likely to be fanned by the decline in prosperity and by the realization that the oil revenues were squandered by Qabus and his ministers. While opposition to the Sultan was to some extent outpaced by the rapid changes following the 1970 coup, and while Qabus could obviously use a part of his money to win popular support, this reprieve may well be coming to an end. There is, of course, a large gap between a potentially revolutionary situation where the mass of the population want to overthrow the

existing regime and a situation where they are organized and actually able to do so. Hence, while the objective conditions for the destruction of the Sultanic regime appear to be maturing again, the emergence of political organizations capable of taking this opportunity in Oman remains to be seen.

Footnotes

¹ During his visit to Washington in January 1976 Sultan Qabus "offered" Ford and Kissinger the use of Masirah air base after the British pulled out. Although the offer was formally refused, US espionage planes have used the base for refueling.

² Ashworth was "Information Officer" at the British headquarters during the guerrilla struggle in South Yemen (1963-1967) and was later head of the propaganda operation directed against China from Hong Kong, specializing in putting out fake anti-communist stories on an unattributable basis (1968-1972).

³ *Le Monde*, February 14, 1978.

⁴ I have attempted to produce a longer analysis of the changing balance of forces in Dhofar in my *Mercenaries and Counter-Insurgency in the Gulf*, Russell Press, Nottingham, 1977, 95 p., an earlier and shorter version of which appeared in *Gulf Studies* no. 1.

⁵ This economic analysis is based on the *Financial Times* supplement on Oman, November 17, 1977.

⁶ *Oman, The Making of a Modern State*, published by (London: Croom Helm, 1977), p.151. This is a fascinating book, full of new and illuminating material on Oman since 1970.

CURRENT EVENTS

Letter from Amman

Five persons died as a result of Jordanian police and army actions against demonstrators in Amman during March 20-24, 1978. Israel had just sent its army and air force into South Lebanon, and the popular response in Jordan protested both the Israeli aggression and Arab inactivity.

At the Jordan University campus on the northern edge of Amman, 300 students organized to go to South Lebanon to resist the Israeli invasion. The 300, five Jordanians and the rest Palestinians, planned to leave incognito for fear of reprisals by the Jordanian authorities. They obtained permission to leave from University President Ishaq Al-Farhan, but on March 24 when the first 140 arrived at the Jordan-Syria border the Jordanian authorities prevented them from leaving. Two of the student volunteers were taken to the General Intelligence Headquarters (*Mukhabarat*), but were later released at the University President's request. The release was highly unusual as King Hussein personally directs the General Intelligence. President Al-Farhan resigned his post on April 7.

When the student volunteers were prevented from crossing the border, 1,000 student supporters remained at the University that night and declared a strike. Police arrived at a building occupied by the strikers and ordered them to leave, but they refused. The potential confrontation was defused by a professor who arranged for municipal bus transportation to take the students home.

At Yarmouk University in Irbid, 50 students were jailed at H-4, an army base near the Iraq Petroleum Company pipeline. As of March 31, the students were still being detained.

In the town of Irbid, in northern Jordan, there were anti-Israeli demonstrations and protests against the Arab silence.

In three separate areas of Amman, protests against the Jordanian government and the Israeli aggression were suppressed by the police. On Jebal El-Nasr, the largely Palestinian community demonstrated on March 23. On Ray Nazzal, protesting students from the Boys' Secondary School were dispersed by police. On Jebal Al-Taj, at the predominantly Jordanian Boys' Secondary School, police attacked a demonstration within the school grounds, injuring many students and the school's headmaster. A math teacher, Saleh Ali Mahsiri, died as a result of police-inflicted wounds.

For the first time in years, Palestinians living in refugee camps turned out in massive demonstrations. At Schneller Camp, just north of Amman, after three days of demonstrations, the Jordanian army intervened, killing a child. The army also entered Baq'a Camp, north of Amman, the second largest camp in Jordan with 100,000 residents. Camp residents demonstrated for three days and attacked the Baq'a police station. Two demonstrators, Amin Mashuhi and Maim Khalid, were killed by the army.

Wahdat Camp, south of Amman, is the largest in Jordan with 180,000 inhabitants. From 1967 to late 1970, Wahdat was the site of the "Palestinian Republic," but during the "Black September" of 1970, the Jordanian army killed numerous residents and damaged over 200 homes in the camp. A funeral procession for Jihad Hamo in Wahdat Camp served as a catalyst for two days of demonstrations. The body of Hamo,

a military leader of the PFLP, was brought back from South Lebanon, where he had been killed in the Israeli invasion. During the police's attempt to suppress the funeral procession and protests, Suleiman Mohammad Al-Banna was mortally wounded and many others were injured.

These spontaneous popular responses clearly show that the repressive machinery of the Hashemite regime has failed to break the political will of both the Jordanians and the Palestinians in Jordan.

Jean Harris
April 1978

Labor on the Move

1. Caribbean Migration: Contract Labor in U.S. Agriculture (Nov-Dec 77). The role of Jamaican and Puerto Rican migrant farm workers in the U.S. and the government contract labor programs that bring them here. (\$2)

2. Power Struggle: Labor and Imperialism in Mexico's Electrical Industry (Sept-Oct 77). Explores one of the main causes of Mexican immigration to the U.S. — the iron grip of U.S. transnationals over Mexican industry and the exploitation of Mexican workers. (\$2)

3. Boss & Bureaucrat: Managing Labor's Discontent (May-June 77). Describes the State's legal apparatus and capital's "labor-management" institutions and their relationship with U.S. trade unions. (\$1.25)

4. Electronics: The Global Industry (April 77). A study of this runaway industry that sets the context for answering questions like: Why do shops runaway? Why are foreign workers not the enemy of U.S. workers? (\$1.25)

5. Capital's Flight: The Apparel Industry Moves South (March 77). A case study of capital's mobility and its effect on U.S. workers' lives, their working conditions, wages and their ability to organize. (\$1.25 — second printing)

6. U.S. Unions in Puerto Rico (May-June 76). A historical and current examination of how the AFL and Teamsters have promoted "business unionism" to facilitate U.S. investments, and Puerto Rico's workers' response. (\$1.25)

7. Chase's Rocky Road (April 76). A collection of articles about the Chase Manhattan Bank, including the bank's management of pension funds, and the changing nature of the workforce and the prospects for organizing bank clerical workers. (\$1.25)

8. Hit and Run: Runaway Shops On the Mexican Border (July-Aug 75). An in-depth study describing the effects and implications of runaway shops on Mexican workers in garments and electronics (95% women) and the U.S. working class. (\$1.25 — third printing)

9. Smouldering Conflict: Dominican Republic, 1965-1975 (April 75). Written 10 years after the U.S. invasion, this report details U.S. investments and takes a look at "trade union imperialism" on the island. (\$1.25)

10. Argentina: AIFLD Losing Its Grip (Nov 74). Details U.S. attempts to subvert militant trade unions in Argentina after Peron's return; particularly relevant in light of the military junta's repression of trade unions. (\$1.25)



Special Offer

SUBSCRIBE FOR ONE YEAR FOR \$11 AND
RECEIVE ONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES FREE.

Enclosed is \$_____ for a one-year sub.

Please send me a free copy of _____

SEND LISTED PRICE + 40¢ POSTAGE FOR ANY
INDIVIDUAL ISSUE

Enclosed is \$_____ for issues

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (circle)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

ZIP _____

NACLA WEST, 464 19th St., Oakland, CA 94612
NACLA EAST, Box 57, Cathedral Station, N.Y., N.Y.
10025
(Payment must accompany orders.)

win keeps you
in touch with the
movement



People in the US and around the world are engaged in struggles to survive—economically, politically, and culturally. Disarmament and the arms race. Feminism. Gay rights. Labor. Racism. Economic democracy. Nuclear Power. WIN Magazine has been defining and exploring these issues for the past decade.

Here are a few samples of recent WIN features:

- "Conspicuous Consumers in the Arms Market" by Michael Klare and Dan Volman
- "Sadat's Initiative in Pursuit of Peace" by Joe Gerson
- "Union Busting at the Washington Post" by Chip Berlet
- "Remembering Sacco and Vanzetti" by Philip Zwerling
- "New Technology and Women Office Workers" by Chris Kraus
- "Cuba Journal" by Patrick Lacefield

At a time when so many forces are threatening our very survival, never was it more urgent to be in touch with developments every week—news, analysis, reviews, and much more. It's time you subscribed to WIN Magazine—your survival guide for the 1980's.

WIN PEACE AND FREEDOM
THRU NONVIOLENT ACTION

Yes! I need WIN. I enclose:
☐ \$15 for one year of WIN
☐ \$8 for six months of WIN

Name _____
Street _____
City _____
State/Zip _____

WIN Magazine/503 Atlantic Ave./Brooklyn,
NY 11217



ERITREA!

The Eritrean people are struggling against hunger, disease and cold. These courageous people are struggling to transform the present colonial terror and inhuman life into that of a free and decent life, with hope and bright future ahead. But, they need your help.

They need:

- Food for the hungry
- Medicine and medical equipment to check and eliminate disease
- Clothing and tents to shelter the displaced from heat, cold wind and rain
- School materials to educate and wipe out ignorance
- Agricultural tools and seeds to enable the people to produce for themselves
- Veterinary medicine and equipment to eliminate animal diseases so that animal life may continue

Cash or check contributions would also be appreciated for easy handling and expediency.

Please send your contributions to:

ERITREAN RELIEF COMMITTEE
P.O. Box 1180
New York, N.Y. 10017

All donations are tax deductible

SOUTHERN AFRICA IS IN THE NEWS



Stay Up-To-Date Each Month With SOUTHERN AFRICA MAGAZINE

*"Essential reading for all who seek to
keep abreast of events... highly recommended."*

Robert van Lierop, Afro-American filmmaker, producer

Please enter my subscription to Southern Africa for:

I enclose \$ _____

Individuals

☐ 1 yr./\$8

☐ 2 yrs./\$15

Institutions

☐ 1 yr./\$18

☐ 2 yrs./\$35

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ St. _____ Zip _____

For airmail subs (per year) add \$12.50 in Africa, Asia and Europe; add \$9.50 in South & Central America

Southern Africa, 156 5th Ave., rm. 709, New York, N.Y. 10010

MANUSCRIPTS SOLICITED ON HUNGER

MERIP has begun a major project on the sources and consequences of hunger and malnutrition in the Middle East. A number of articles will be published on this topic in *MERIP Reports* over the next two years. The Editorial Committee solicits articles, reviews and other relevant manuscripts. Some specific foci of the project are:

- History of agriculture in the Middle East
- Political economy of agriculture and food consumption in the contemporary Middle East
- Politics of land reform and development strategies
- United States influence on the Middle East food supply
- Middle East in the world hunger crisis
- Population control and scientific medicine as palliatives to the regional hunger crisis

RESPONSE

Dear MERIP,

This is a brief note prompted by your Horn of Africa issue (*MERIP Reports* no. 62). It is intended more to open certain questions and to express some disquiet, than to provide definite answers. Above all, it is written as a contribution to the debate on events in the Horn—a debate that will continue at least as long as the present conflicts there, and probably longer.

I have been in Ethiopia twice in recent months, first in December 1977 and then in February of this year. Prior to my first trip to Addis Abbaba, I was in Aden for some weeks. Therefore, I had the occasion to talk with a wide range of people from, and involved in the affairs of, the region: Ethiopian government officials and diplomats; representatives of Democratic Yemen, Somalia, Russia and Cuba; and officials of both the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) who, contrary to many reports, retain offices in Aden. In addition, in Europe I have had debates with a considerable number of supporters of the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Party (EPRP).

I am certainly not persuaded of all that the government in Ethiopia claims. I do not condone the campaign of "red terror" waged by the Derg and its supporters. And I do not endorse the idea that the Eritrean movement has been taken over by "counter-revolutionaries," although the 'Marxist' character of either Eritrean group has probably been overstated. Whilst I think that the optimal solution to the Eritrean question would be a federal one *within* a unified Ethiopia, I also think that the popular democratic character of the Eritrean movement, as well as history, make it necessary that the Eritrean people be given the right to a separate state if they so wish.

However, I am unconvinced by the predominant trend of left coverage of the Horn of Africa dispute. I think it does not take into account a number of major factors, and David Laitin's article on Somalia in *MERIP Reports* reproduced some of these distortions. A recent article by Gerard Chaliand in *Foreign Policy* ("The Horn of Africa's Dilemma," No. 30, Spring 1978) also seems to me to reinforce this kind of misconception, despite the many true and interesting points it makes. The remarks that follow take Laitin and Chaliand's articles as *symptomatic* of a more general school of left writing on the Horn, and are designed to pose the elements of a different view.

The Somali State. No one acquainted with the area denies that since 1969 the Somali military regime has introduced many reforms, has benefitted the people, and has created an honest and efficient state compared to the standards of the previous regime. It is indeed one of the tragedies of the recent Ogaden campaign that the Siad Barre government has risked its previous eight years of achievement. But beyond this positive assessment, there is a tendency on the left to paint a rosy picture of the Somali regime which is at variance with reality.

Laitin (p. 11) refers to Somalia as "a truly classless society," and Chaliand (p. 121) describes the regime as "more populist"

than Ethiopia's. Nowhere are the real class forces in Somalia identified. It is nonsense to present Somalia as classless and evasive to call it populist. In fact, there is a flourishing bourgeoisie in Somalia. The main export, livestock, is controlled by private merchants, and Laitin admits (p. 13) that the civil service "still lives well." The bourgeoisie, whether in the private or state sectors, has enriched itself with the hundreds of millions of Saudi dollars which have recently flowed into the country. By contrast, strikes are illegal in socialist Somalia.

On foreign policy, Laitin tells us (p. 16) that "Somalia concurrently became an active and vociferous identifier with the 'third world'." This is a bit simplified: while Somalia did turn to the Soviet Union for arms when the West refused to help in 1963, it tried not to antagonize the conservative Arab countries. One small detail worth remembering is that despite direct appeals to him, Siad Barre prevented the Peoples Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO) from carrying out information activities and organizing work in Somalia. In 1975, Somalia invited Saudi financing and offered to oust the Russians. It was Saudi Arabia and the USA which delayed this development for two years. Inside Somalia, the continuing and unchallenged supremacy of Islam, in its conservative social form,* has influenced the Saudi connection, as well as, in a different way, the Somali entry to the Arab League in 1974. This latter action was a blatant attempt to build ties with the reactionary Arab states, postulated on the totally false premise that the Somalis are Arabs.

On the Ogaden question, there seems to be an amazing reluctance to admit what occurred: the Somali regular army invaded Ethiopia. Just that. Chaliand (p. 122), like others, talks of the "offensive launched by the Western Somali Liberation Front" as if the WSLF had taken the initiative or done the main fighting. While the WSLF is no doubt independent to some degree of the Mogadiscio regime, it cannot act without the latter's support. The main military operations were conducted by the Somali army. There is no more truth in Chaliand's version than in claiming, for example, that the Chinese military who entered Korea in 1951 were simply "volunteers." While Chaliand (p. 121) says that Somali claims are "justified," there is no avoiding the issue that the invasion of Ogaden was a counter-revolutionary venture, because it strengthened the nationalist current inside Ethiopia, thus making any negotiated settlement of the Eritrean question more difficult. In addition, by posing a direct military threat to Ethiopia, the Ogaden invasion strengthened the hand of the military in Ethiopia, thus undermining those civilian forces working for a return to civilian rule, or at least a shift of some power to civilian institutions. The Somali regime calls itself socialist, yet no socialist can support the settlement of border disputes by force, let alone the kind of treacherous stab in the back which Siad Barre and his regime delivered to the struggling Ethiopian revolution. Even the EPRP condemns the Somali invasion. It is further to Barre's discredit that he took this initiative only after receiving assurances from Washington that the West would support him. The West was hoping that the invasion would topple the Derg and enable a new pro-

imperialist regime to emerge in Ethiopia. As it happened, Washington reneged on its commitments, but the damage had been done. A year later, the situation is back to square one, with the exception that tens of thousands of people are dead, wounded and uprooted, and the flames of national enmity are fiercer than ever.

The Ethiopian Regime. Most left discussion of the Horn shirks the most fundamental fact that a revolution has occurred in Ethiopia, and that is continuing despite the immense difficulties it faces. The old ruling class has been swept away and its property expropriated by a popular upsurge unlike any seen before in Africa, with the possible exception of Algeria. Taking Chaliand's comparison of the two regimes, I would say that it is incontestable that *the advance towards socialism and the destruction of the old ruling class has gone much further in Ethiopia than in Somalia*. In this sense, there has been a revolution in Ethiopia and none in Somalia. Chaliand (pp. 117-119) avoids this point, confusing the Derg's coup with the wider revolutionary process. Moreover, he is rather misleading when he says (p. 119) that "the Derg has weakened the Ethiopian economy." In fact, 90 percent of the Ethiopian population lives in the countryside, and the effect of the land reform, combined with improvements in transport and three years of good harvest, has been to raise the income of the rural population. The chaotic character of the post-1974 Ethiopian government, plus the wars, have certainly led to economic problems, but the underlying trend has been positive.

The overwhelming impression one gets from visiting Addis Abbaba is that—despite the red terror, the counter-revolutionary threat, and the separate threat from the far-left EPRP—a substantial body of civilian militants, allied to some military officials, are trying to continue the revolutionary process and to establish a socialist regime in Ethiopia. The outcome of this venture is by no means decided, but the chances of such a socialist victory have been made even worse by the Somali invasion and the EPRP's sectarian campaign of assassination against government officials and supporters. The prevalent left characterization of the Ethiopian regime—one which ignores the revolution that has occurred or sees the state as "fascist" or "counter-revolutionary"—therefore obscures the most important feature of the whole revolutionary panorama in the Horn.

This naive anti-imperialist stance runs the risk of endorsing a pro-imperialist position, one that is inadvertently clear from the final sentences of Chaliand's article. Whether written by Chaliand or added by the editors of *Foreign Policy*, these amount to explicit support for the most counter-revolutionary forces in the region. "It would be unwise for the United States openly to support the enemies of pro-Soviet Ethiopia . . . Regional allies, such as Iran and Saudi Arabia, should be left to handle the situation in the Horn. The conflict is not ideological but above all strategic and military." (p. 131) It is surprising to find a writer, who is a Marxist with a substantial anti-imperialist reputation, offering advice to US imperialism on action in a part of the third world and encouraging the intervention of the two most reactionary countries in the area. Whilst it is legitimate and indeed good for Chaliand to get his views published in a magazine like *Foreign Policy*, it is surely imprudent for him to use this opportunity to suggest to Washington how best to proceed.* Moreover, it is quite unjustified for him to claim that the conflict is "not ideological," for this denies the primary role played by the class forces at work in Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia. Not only is this untrue—after all, the explosion of the Ethiopian revolution since 1974 led to the present crisis—but it also encourages the Brzezinski view that sees the Horn uniquely in terms of US-Soviet relations ("linkage") and denies the specificity of the local forces involved.

To conclude: I am by no means sure what will result from the present developments in the Horn, and I do not want to substitute a simple "pro-Ethiopian" position for the "anti-Ethiopian" one prevalent on the left. But there are more questions involved than the latter position normally admits, and I hope this letter serves to draw attention to a few of these.

Fraternally,
Fred Halliday
April 1978

*Despite some social reforms affecting women, cliterodectomy continues unchallenged.

*The purpose of *Foreign Policy*, like its counterpart *Foreign Affairs*, is to debate how best to defend the international interests of the US state. The difference, as one British columnist working in New York put it, is that "*Foreign Affairs* is for warmongers on the way out, *Foreign Policy* for warmongers on the way up."

RACE & CLASS

A JOURNAL
FOR BLACK AND
THIRD WORLD
LIBERATION

VOLUME XIX
SPRING 1978
NUMBER 4

Racist Ideology and Popular Fiction. by Margaret Marshment
Women and Work in Cuba. by Carollee Bengelsdorf
and Alice Hageman
Towards Understanding Peasant Experience. by John Berger
Ethiopia 1974-77. by Jan Valdelin
Notes: Machel on knowledge and liberation,
South Africa and the death penalty,
Reviews.

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE INSTITUTE OF RACE
RELATIONS AND THE TRANSNATIONAL INSTITUTE

Race & Class is available to individuals on subscription at £5.50/\$10 per annum (\$15 for institutions). I enclose £5.50/\$10 for 1 year's subscription starting with the current issue.

Name

Address

. Zip Code

Please send cash with order, cheques made payable to 'The Institute of Race Relations', 247 Pentonville Road, London N1 UK.

- ⁸Between 1965 and 1970, the number of tractors in the private sector increased from 15,000 to 24,000.
- ⁹This is only hearsay information that I cannot vouch for.
- ¹⁰M. Benachenchou, "Problemes sociologiques de l'autogestion agricole en Mitidja," These de 3e cycle, University of Bordeaux, 1969, p. 183.
- ¹¹The private French banks in Algeria were not interested in providing agricultural credit even during the heyday of the colonial period, since the profitability of Algerian agriculture was so low. See P. Ernest-Picard, *La monnaie et le credit en Algerie depuis 1830* (Alger/Paris: Carbonel, Plon, 1930).
- ¹²A preliminary survey had given an estimate of about 1,650,000 hectares that could be expropriated. The reason for the difference between this figure and the actual amount expropriated is not entirely clear. Evidently some large or absentee property has escaped expropriation. Expropriation must in fact be initiated by local Municipal Councils in which the rural bourgeoisie is strongly represented and which are therefore often not very enthusiastic about the Agrarian Revolution. On the other hand, many large farms are the undivided property of a number of heirs, none of whom may surpass the maximum property limit.
- ¹³About fifty of these villages have been completed and opened as of mid-1977.
- ¹⁴Raffinot and Jacquemot, p. 317.
- ¹⁵J.C. Martens, *Le modele algerien de developpement* (Alger: SNED, 1973), p. 191.
- ¹⁶In addition to low pay, agricultural workers are often not employed year-round.
- ¹⁷See A. Montjauxe, *Les exigences et les perspectives du developpement agricole de l'Algerie* (Alger, 1960).
- ¹⁸The regime does not intend to eliminate this bourgeoisie. Private enterprise in commerce and light industry will to some degree be maintained. According to the National Charter (1976), the control over capital should, however, not confer social and political power.

- ¹⁹The new constitution of 1976 has restored a limited parliamentary system in Algeria. No opposition parties are allowed, but local or regional party organizations are expected to put up at least two rival candidates for every seat. Though all of these candidates are members of the National Liberation Front, some of them from the right wing of the party are actually opposed to government policy. So the regime must recruit voters who will support candidates favoring government policy. The restoration of a parliamentary regime was necessary to recruit new members to the country's political class that had been a rather closed and (because of internal conflicts) steadily diminishing group since 1965. On the other hand, the regime has used the opportunity to "promote" some of the less competent members of the establishment away to honorable but uninfluential parliamentary posts.
- ²⁰President Boumedienne is rather strongly opposed to any kind of personality cult, but in the absence of a strong and active party organization his person becomes more and more the central focus of political loyalty or opposition.
- ²¹The un-peasantlike character of a large part of Algeria's rural population has been emphasized by several authors, including A. Sayad and P. Bourdieu, *La deracinement* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1964), M. Cornaton, *Les regroupements de la decolonization en Algerie* (Paris: Editions Ouvrieres, 1967), and A. Zghal, "La participation de la paysannerie maghebine a la construction nationale," *Revue Tunisienne de Sciences Sociales*, 7(22), pp. 125-161 and also by Zghal, "Pourquoi la reforme agraire ne mobilise pas les paysans maghebines?" *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord*, 1975.
- ²²The unorthodox religious brotherhoods and local holy men who constituted the focus of rural folk religion were in fact favored by the French colonial regime, which hoped that they would keep the peasants passive in spite of their poverty. Today, the conservative rural bourgeoisie dominates the religious brotherhoods and has used this channel to put pressure on small peasants and landless agricultural workers not to volunteer for the Agrarian Revolution. In 1976, President Boumedienne publicly attacked the conservative brotherhoods.
- ²³See also the article by T. Smith, "The Political and Economic Ambitions of Algerian Land Reform," *Middle East Journal* 29(3), pp. 259-278.

SPECIAL OFFER!

Send \$1.25 for each individual issue or \$5.00 for any five issues.

NORTH AFRICA

- 27 Imperialism and Revolution in Libya
- 35 State Capitalism in Algeria
- 48 Algerian Peasants and National Politics
- 54 Mauretania
- 60 Medicine and Imperialism in Morocco

See MERIP resource list on inside back cover

You'd be better off reading the **Guardian**

America's largest independent radical newspaper is packed full of information each week on freedom fighters at home and around the world—women's struggles, the Black movement, labor, community fights, liberations struggles in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Plus film and book reviews. And incisive political commentary and analysis. **Subscribe today—it's a better deal!**



- ☐ Send me a 6-week trial sub for \$1.00
- ☐ Send me a 25-week sub for \$10.00
- ☐ Send me a year's sub for \$17.00

Name _____
Address _____
City/State _____
Zip _____

Send to: the **Guardian**
33 West 17th Street
New York 10011

MERIP RESOURCE LIST

MERIP REPORTS (All back issues are \$1.25 each)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25 <i>Syria and the Baath Party</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 54 <i>Mauretania: Formation of a Neo-Colonial Society</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 27 <i>Imperialism and Revolution in Libya</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 <i>Palestine Communist Party 1919-1948</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 30 <i>The Political Economy of Arms</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 56 <i>Crisis in Egypt</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 31 <i>Open Door in the Middle East</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 57 <i>Detroit's Yemeni Workers: PNC Document</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35 <i>State Capitalism in Algeria</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 58 <i>Women in Egypt; Israeli Election; Pakistan Uprising</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 37 <i>Iranian Nationalism and the Great Powers</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 59 <i>Labor Migration in the M.E.; Israeli Settlements</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 38 <i>Middle East Studies Network</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 60 <i>Medicine and Imperialism in Morocco; Israeli Settlements</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 39 <i>Soviet Policy in the Middle East</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 61 <i>Lebanese National Movement</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 43 <i>Land Reform and Agribusiness in Iran</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 62 <i>Upheaval in the Horn</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 46 <i>Sudan: Colonialism and Class Struggle</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 63 <i>China & the Middle East</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 48 <i>Algerian Peasants and National Politics</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 64 <i>Sadat's Desperate Mission; Arms Transfers</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 49 <i>The Left in Israel: Zionism vs. Socialism</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 65 <i>Backdrop to the Peace Puzzle</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 50 <i>Women Workers in Egypt, Israel</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 66 <i>South Lebanon; Eritrea; Political Repression in Egypt</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 52 <i>Culture and Resistance</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 67 <i>Algeria's Agrarian Revolution; Uprising in Tunisia; Oman</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 53 <i>Class Transformation in Palestine</i> | |

BOOKS

- | | |
|---|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Middle East Oil and the Energy Crisis</i> by Joe Stork, Monthly Review Press paperback | \$5.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Arabs in Israel</i> by Sabri Jiryis, Monthly Review Press paperback | \$4.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Fall of Jerusalem</i> by Abdullah Schliefer, Monthly Review Press paperback | \$3.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Arab World and Israel</i> by Ahmad al-Kodsy and Eli Lobel, Monthly Review Press paperback | \$2.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Class Conflict in Egypt</i> by Mahmoud Hussein, Monthly Review Press paperback | \$3.75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Arabia Without Sultans</i> by Fred Halliday, Random House paperback | \$5.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Review of Middle East Studies II</i> , Ithaca Press paperback | \$3.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>With My Own Eyes</i> by Felicia Langer, Ithaca Press paperback | \$5.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Israel and the Palestinians</i> ed. by Davis, Mack and Yuval-Davis, Ithaca Press paperback | \$7.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Our Roots Are Still Alive - The Story of the Palestinian People</i> , Peoples Press paperback | \$3.50 |

PAMPHLETS

- | | |
|---|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Transitional Program of the Lebanese National Movement</i> | \$.75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Hitched to a Red Star: People's Democratic Republic of Yemen</i> by Eric Rouleau | \$.25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Wordless Wish: From Citizen to Refugee</i> by Erskine Childers, AAUG Info. Paper 6 | \$1.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Dynamics of Land Alienation</i> by John Ruedy; and <i>The Demographic Transformation of Palestine</i> by Janet Abu-Lughod, AAUG Info. Paper 5 | \$1.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Civil War in Lebanon</i> by Samih Farsoun and Walter Carroll, Monthly Review, June 1976 | \$1.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Journal of Palestine Studies</i> , current issue | \$3.00 |

SUBSCRIPTIONS: 1 year (10 issues)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| Individuals | \$10.00 |
| Non-profit Institutions | \$18.00 |
| Other Institutions | \$30.00 |

OVERSEAS POSTAGE:

- | | |
|--|---------|
| Canada, Mexico, overseas surface | \$ 3.00 |
| Europe, N. Africa and Latin America, airmail | \$10.50 |
| All other airmail | \$13.00 |

SUBSCRIPTIONS FREE TO PRISONERS

- Enclosed is _____ for a subscription to **MERIP Reports**
beginning with issue number _____
- Enclosed is _____ for the literature checked above
- Enclosed is _____ for additional overseas postage
- Enclosed is _____ for a contribution to MERIP's work
- _____ Total Amount Enclosed

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Send check or money order to **MERIP**, P.O. Box 3122, Columbia Heights Station, Washington, D.C. 20010
Add 25¢ for postage and handling for each order.



MERIP REPORTS
Middle East Research & Information Project
P.O. Box 3122
Columbia Heights Station
Washington, D.C. 20010

Non-profit org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Washington, D.C.
Permit 165



2408 18th St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20036
Glad Day Press
UNION ILL. 450
308 Stewart Ave., Elmhurst, N.Y. 11358